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LIFE OF GIBSON.

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H. Adlard Sc.

JOHN GIBSON, R.A.

London: Longmans & Co.

L I F E
OF
JOHN GIBSON, R.A.
SCULPTOR.

EDITED BY LADY EASTLAKE.

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P R E F A C E.

I HAVE been induced, by the earnest request of mutual friends, to undertake the task and privilege of editing the Life of Mr. Gibson. It has been an occupation both sad and pleasant to trace the course of so original and guileless a character, and of so valued a friend.

I am principally indebted to Mr. Henry Sandbach of Hafodunos, to Miss Mary Lloyd of Rhagatt, to Mr. Penry Williams, and to Miss Hosmer, of Rome, for a large portion of the materials contained in the following pages, and for much information during the course of the work.

E. E.

October 1869.

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LIFE

OF

JOHN GIBSON.



CHAPTER I.

Characteristics of Gibson—His Greek Predilections—Devotion to his Art—Indifference to Gain—History of his Autobiography—Mrs. Henry Sanibach—Standards of Sculpture—Education of a Sculptor.

IT is usual to sum up the character of a man towards the close of his biography, and this custom will not perhaps be entirely departed from here; but, in the Life now about to be offered to the public, it is expedient to give the general reader some clue to the character, before introducing him to the individual. The character of 'John Gibson, Sculptor, Rome'—a simple address well known to a large circle—is one in which society as it is, and must be constituted, is slow to believe. We are ready to acknowledge superiority

when shown in brilliant abilities, and feats of intellectual strength, but we smile incredulously when told of one who has less of the leaven of our common nature than we know to be in ourselves. But this was simply and truly the case with Gibson, and it will materially assist the reader's first impressions of the coming pages, if he can be prevailed upon to start with this belief.

There is no word more overused, and more falsely used, in modern parlance than the word 'Genius.' It is dealt out right and left to every form of art, science, and success, with a frequency which is alone a sufficient proof of its misapplication. We do not presume to take up the reader's time with a definition of this term, but some conception of what we believe it to mean, may be superficially expressed in the assertion that genius resides more in the qualities of the mind, than in the powers of the brain. Admitting this, there follows, therefore, a certain moral consistency in the general character of a genius, which is sometimes wanting in the man of talent. The genius may be a thorough simpleton in the affairs of this world, and a dunce in matters which the rest of us find it very easy to acquire; but these incapacities, which we begin by treating as follies or shams, we

end, when convinced of their real source and nature (and who was not so convinced in Gibson's case ?) by respecting with a feeling which is good for ourselves. We all, even the most guileful among us, love the sacred simplicity of childhood, and know that this quality will depart with riper years, to be replaced by others less attractive, but more needful for the battle of life. But Gibson, in this respect, remained a child, never exchanging his guileless simplicity for a maturer, but less pure wisdom. His estimate of mankind was amusing—no one was more easily imposed upon by man, and still more so by woman. Indeed, the victory was too easy for many to attempt it; his very simplicity protected him. Yet he saw readily into characters of analogous sincerity with his own, and had very sweeping definitions for those which were too glaringly the reverse. Living at Rome in a moral atmosphere the most opposite to that within his own breast, he would thus occasionally deliver his soul: 'The sons of Adam are very bad animals—the beasts would be as bad as Christians if they could speak.' (Letter to Miss Parkes, June 19, 1849.)

Thus far Gibson's wisdom was of a very childlike type. In matters of principle, however, in single-

hearted, courageous truthfulness, in indomitable power of resolution, and in a certain dignity of self-respect, no one ever arrived more fully at man's estate—in generous recognition of the merits of others, in ready forgiveness of injuries, few will attain a higher standard. That he enjoyed entire immunity from envy or jealousy is what we would fain accept as the *sine quâ non* with all great artists, but that he was equally delivered from irritability of nerve or temper is what cannot always be asserted of the votaries of the arts. But Gibson emphatically possessed his soul in patience and peace. He was habitually serene in temperament, like his own statues in repose; though there was fire and passion beneath, as some of his works might also exemplify. But though capable of ardent affection, his love for his art asserted its supremacy, and (not altogether perhaps without an occasional struggle) took the place of all other sources of happiness. He passed through life therefore with few cares, and, beyond his two brothers, with no domestic ties; though no man was ever the object of truer friendships and purer attachments.

Gibson especially possessed that characteristic of genius which bends circumstances to itself,

but which does not return the compliment. It mattered not where he was—in the society of high or low, under the influences of foreign or English life—he was always the same. Those who knew him, knew what to expect; always found it, and always loved it more and more. To such his friendship was a source of mutual interest; to those who survive him his memory is a common bond.

Yet, though repudiating the power of external influences, in the common sense, over his grand, normal nature, there is no doubt that he was fortunate in his honest, lowly birth, and early home training—fortunate in the very disadvantages, so called, of poverty and position, which, rightly used, are the surest roads to distinction and success. What inclined an obscure lad,—ushered into the world under circumstances apparently the most adverse (his father was a market gardener),—to that love of art which culminated in a devotion to the abstract forms of Ideal Beauty—what affinity there was between a poor Welsh boy, born at the close of the eighteenth century, speaking in his early years only Welsh, and predestined, it would seem, to no higher lot than the tillage of the earth—what affinity there was be-

tween him and that ancient Greek mind, no longer brought forth even on its own soil—is a question which it is fruitless to ask. Genius, in whatever form, is without descent, a new creation, admitting of no solution, not traceable, save as the will of the Creator. Yet, though foremost in that classic predilection, Gibson was not alone in it. It ran like a vein through the family. Both his brothers, Solomon and Benjamin, followed him from afar in the taste for sculpture. The younger—‘Mr. Ben,’ as Gibson always called him—devoted also his energies to the study of the classic languages, and, living for many years with the great sculptor at Rome, was the ready interpreter of those ancient oracles whence John Gibson drew constant inspiration. Solomon Gibson, the other brother, was also a devourer of books, but there was an absence of purpose in the direction of his studies, and he passed through life, a strange and useless, though not a commonplace man, chiefly dependant on the bounty of the object of these memoirs.

Gibson’s character has been, in one respect, mistaken by some who knew him little, and looked upon him from a conventional point of view. He has been represented as fond of money. We meet this supposition at once, and without reserve.

Where a man's life was as clear as daylight, this was perhaps the only point on which there could well be any diversity of opinion. That he was, thought to love money by some, was simply a conclusion from his not loving to spend it in their way. But temperaments like Gibson's have little use for money in the form that tells in the world. He had been brought up in habits of plainness and frugality, and his heart was so simple and his wants so few that he was scarcely conscious that there was any self-denial in them. He cared not what he ate or drank—his tailor's bill cost him very little—his ruminations on the Greeks cost him nothing. He gave no dinners, and set his name to few public subscriptions. In truth, he cared too little about money, and, from that very reason, was indifferent to money's worth. He hardly knew what he possessed, and considered some mercantile friends exceedingly kind for keeping his earnings, to the amount of many thousands, in their hands, and allowing him three per cent. Had he given to financial matters the mere average amount of thought, he might easily and legitimately have trebled or quadrupled his fortune. He might have done as other sculptors did, and •do (at least, in Rome), and have kept a supply of

replicas of his most popular works all ready in his studio, for sale to those who like to come, to see, and to carry away—such *replicas* representing literally so much ready money to a sculptor of established fame. But Gibson refrained from such practices; not from abstinence, not from overstrained principle, not because he thought them wrong in others; but simply because his thoughts never travelled in the money-getting direction. Where his treasure was, there was his heart; and whoever might visit his studio, whatever it might contain, Gibson was always absorbed in one subject, and that was the particular work, or part of the work,—were it but the turn of a corner of drapery—which was then under his modelling hands. Time was nothing to him—he was long and fastidious; sometimes, as with his Hope, recommencing a statue entirely *de novo*. His pupil, Miss Hosmer, when modelling her Medusa head, expressed to him her shame at having been so long about it. Gibson said, ‘Always try to do the best you can. Never mind how long you are upon a work—no. No one will ask how long you have been except fools; you don’t care what fools think.’ His friends were even anxious lest he should not provide sufficiently •

for his latter days. In his own simple, quaint words, the following conversation passed between himself and one superficially interested in his welfare. 'Mr. — said, "I hope you are getting rich, for, after all, a man should look to that. Fame is such an uncertain thing, and people are so undecided about it: to-day one man is the fashion, to-morrow another, and so on." I replied, "What you say is too true. It is owing to the ignorance of the patrons of art, who are more rich than knowing on the subject of art. But the productions of a man of real talent, refined by cultivation and taste upon the unchangeable (unfashionable) laws of Nature, are the most likely to become fashionable hereafter. The mere money-making artist gets rich, lives, dies, and there's an end of him." I did not tell Mr. — whether I was rich or no.' (Letter to Mrs. Sandbach, Oct. 19, 1841.)

So much for his negative indifference to gain—his positive generosity was equally as indubitable. He paid his men not only liberally but lavishly, making them frequent presents. His open-handed unquestioning dealings in a few mercantile matters of art astonished those accustomed to the sharp practice of the present day. He allowed his

brother Solomon much more than he spent on himself, and he was ever ready to help the unfortunate, or to be imposed upon by the designing.

It is a pure and beautiful, and, above all, a happy life to dwell on, without one dark corner to conceal—the very beau ideal of the artist-career—serene and uneventful, yet forming a consistent whole in which the reader will rather find repose than excitement. Gibson always saw his way straight on—was never irresolute—his aim at excellence was without self-interest; his desire for lasting fame at no expense of peace. And he had the happiness of knowing himself to be the right man in the right place. For he spent his life in the only spot which he acknowledged as the sculptor's true home; yet not doing, in one respect, as the Romans are supposed to do, for he kept aloof from politics and intrigues; ever communing with what he felt to be the True and the Beautiful, and serving Art for her own sake only. And in his own language he thus recorded how richly she rewarded her votary: 'In my art what do I feel? what do I encounter?—happiness: love which does not depress me, difficulties which I do not fear, resolutions which never

abate, flights which carry me above the crowd, ambition which tramples no one down.' (Letter to Mrs. Sandbach, January 25, 1842.)

In attempting to present the Life of John Gibson to the world I have been especially anxious that he should speak for himself. His thoughts and modes of expression (however lovingly mimicked by a few joyous friends) are such as none but he could furnish—the language of an Original, who never learned to spell! Ample materials fortunately exist, both in his letters to friends and in a fragmentary autobiography, on which I shall largely draw. The history of this autobiography is in itself interesting, and introduces us to a lady who played a conspicuous part in the few but deep influences which swayed the mind of the sculptor, and to whom the tribute to his art, just quoted, was addressed.

In 1838–9—Gibson was then forty-eight years of age, and attaining the zenith of his activity—Mr. and Mrs. Henry Sandbach, of Liverpool, spent the winter at Rome. Mrs. Sandbach, herself not unknown to fame,* united all that most commands admiration and respect. She was young,

* Author of *Aurora*, *Giuliano de' Medici*, &c.

enthusiastic, gentle, and joyous, with a beauty of figure and face peculiarly her own,—as engaging as it was intellectual—with gifts of genius (and never was that word more rightly applied) which moved harmoniously in subjection to duty and decorum—shedding gladness around her. Thus endowed, she was peculiarly fitted to enthrall the better part of every intelligent man, and to be the friend and safe inspiration of kindred genius. Withal, she was the granddaughter of William Roscoe, of Liverpool—Gibbon's first patron—and inheritor of the intellect and culture associated with that name. Between her and Gibson ensued that class of tender friendship which is the highest compliment man and woman can pay each other. We have been favoured with the perusal of Gibson's letters to this gifted lady, and with the permission to extract from them. To Mrs. Sandbach's affectionate admiration the first idea of the autobiography was owing. She felt, as all who appreciated Gibson felt, that the man was as much above the comprehension of the many as his works; and in urging him to commit to paper the story of his simple and diligent life, she foresaw that the sculptor and his art would alike rise in estimation. Traces of her urgency in this respect

occur as early as 1841; combated by him with modesty. 'I suppose I must begin the task which you have given me, which is to take up myself. But I have not done works of sufficient importance to authorise my writing an account of myself. It is female partiality desires it.'

Subsequently, in 1851, on occasion of a visit by Gibson to Hafodunos, Mr. Sandbach's country seat, the commencement of the biography was penned by her hand from his dictation. It is prefaced by observations on his character, in which she dwells on that divine quality of aspiration, 'Higher still, and higher,' which was the motto of his studio, and the star which led him on in the worship of the highest sculptural and moral perfection. To this worship Mrs. Sandbach's influence gave ever fresh stimulus and direction. The fragment thus penned by her, and afterwards chiefly embodied in a later manuscript, ends abruptly with this note. 'Here, I regret to say, our conversations were broken off—Gibson's departure for Rome, and the death of his brother ('Mr. Ben') changed the bright aspect of our meetings. And now I much fear that ill health on my part may prevent my pursuing a subject to which I have so long looked forward with hope and

pleasure. Margaret Sandbach, October, 1851. She died, after great suffering, in 1852!

There is no doubt that Gibson was under promise to Mrs. Sandbach to carry on the thread of the narrative. In this he was, some years later, greatly encouraged and assisted by a gentleman of great scholarship and accomplishments, long resident in Rome, Mr. Robert Hay.* By his advice Gibson was induced to note down daily some portion of his reminiscences, and to submit the result to him at the close of every week. For this purpose the sculptor and his pupil, Miss Hosmer (who came to Rome during the winter of 1852-3), dined with Mr. Hay every Saturday. After dinner, Mr. Hay, then nearly blind, would walk up and down the room, listening attentively to the week's work, expressing his interest, making his criticisms, and carefully following the writer's intention through sentences not always composed according to the laws of syntax; and, while leading Gibson adroitly to some paraphrase which made his meaning more clear, never interposing any suggestion that would make the style less his own. These Saturday evenings continued for three

* Formerly private secretary to the Duke of Wellington.

years, carrying the narrative up to 1859, where it stops short.

We may add that one principal motive which induced Gibson to pen these reminiscences was the desire to impress upon his English readers the necessity of a Roman education for the student in sculpture. On this point he was an anxious and zealous advocate, ever drawing from his own experience, and from the character of most of the later public monuments in London, fresh arguments for a radical reform in the direction of English taste and the training of English talent. He was brought, however unavailingly, more than once into communication with the English government on this point.

The subject of sculpture, as more or less of all art, is one on which it is peculiarly difficult for a practical, hardworking, hurried, journal-led public to reason. It requires a class of education for which they have few opportunities and small occasion, and for which they show their inaptitude at the outset by thinking all education superfluous. At the same time sculpture has a superficial side which peculiarly invites superficial judgment. For this art has two aspects—the one very low, the other supremely high. To fashion a lump of clay

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into the likeness of a solid object is a mighty easy manufacture—to know the conditions, capacities and limits of true style in sculpture is very high art. The multitude are caught by the mere imitation of familiar things, and give praise and encouragement to that of which they know not the utter facility. The appreciation of real plastic excellence requires a rare and peculiar training upon a naturally elevated feeling, and is, therefore, confined to the very few. The charm of antique sculpture and that of classic scholarship are pretty much on the same level; both are equally incomprehensible to the ignorant. Of five hundred averagely educated men and women in society there are not five who really and intelligently do homage to the transcendent sublimity of the Elgin marbles. Nevertheless four-fifths, at least, of that five hundred consider themselves qualified, without any standard of taste, to criticise what is fine, and admire what is wretched. The sculptor's true public, like the subjects of his art, is and must be very limited in extent. There is a prevalent feeling abroad that the excellencies handed down to us in the works of the old masters—whether sculptors or painters, Greek or Italian—are lifeless conventions, from which it is a merit to depart as

widely as possible. As regards the art of painting, such contempt for authority, such aims at novelty, are less objectionable. In Gibson's own words, in a letter to Mr. Sandbach, 'Sculpture is more calculated to improve and refine the taste than pictures are, because it is an art which requires chaste composition, beauty and correctness of form, and high sentiment—painting, on the other hand, admits of a far greater range, it allows the less beautiful and the familiar.' Though, therefore, the practice of the great painters of various bygone schools will scarcely be equalled, far less improved upon, yet novelties in subjects are the natural growth of every day. But the standards of sculpture as regards subject, treatment, and execution have been defined by works of an excellence which modern ages can never reach, and which it is only a wonder that any age should have attained. Answering a friend who suggested a poetical image as a subject, Gibson says, 'There are poetical pictures produced by description which are not so clear when represented in our art. When an artist has learned the limits of his art he is far advanced.' Novelties in sculpture he therefore regarded rather as signs of ignorance than of genius, and earnestly

lifted up his voice against them. He maintained that the danger of aiming at novelty, or of falling into feebleness, were best counteracted by an education at Rome, under the shadow of antique examples, and of the then best living votaries. And Gibson was far from singular in that respect. Flaxman studied seven years in Rome, and urged all young English students to do the same. Thorwaldsen dated his birth from March 8, 1797—the day he first entered Rome. It would seem as if the northern nature combined most readily with the spirit of antique art. Canova, the soft and graceful Venetian, however exquisite in finish and sometimes in sentiment, never attained that feeling for force and simplicity which distinguishes Flaxman, Thorwaldsen, and Gibson. But at the same time he urged his scholars to follow his precepts more than his practice—to look at the objects contained in the Vatican, and at the figures living in the streets, rather than at those produced in his own studio.

The question of the true mode of educating a sculptor is mentioned so powerfully and urgently both in the reminiscences and correspondence of Gibson, that, unless admitted fully into the

following pages, one of his chief wishes would remain unfulfilled. We will now let him speak for himself. There are few hearts which will not see much that is touching and edifying in these simple annals.

CHAPTER II.

Birth and Home Education—Drawing of Geese and Horse—Removal to Liverpool—Studies at Print-shop Windows—School Anecdotes—Apprenticed to a Cabinet-maker—Resolution to be a Sculptor—Indentures transferred to Marble Workers—Mr. William Roscoe—Cartoon—Study of Anatomy—The d' Aguilar Family—John Kemble—First Exhibition at Royal Academy—Removal to London—Busts for Mr. Watson Taylor.

‘IT is the love of my art and the desire of imparting to the young the experience which I have gained in the course of a long period which induce me to record a few incidents in my life, and especially to state all concerning my studies during a residence of upwards of forty years at Rome.

‘I will begin from my earliest days to recount what my memory has retained.

‘Conway, North Wales, is greatly admired for the beauty of its scenery. It was there, near the castle, I was born in the year 1790, and christened in the parish church.* My father and mother were

* Gibson may be excused for a slight inaccuracy as to the place of his birth. He was born at Gyllin, a small hamlet near Conway, but christened in Conway Church. His parents came to live near Conway Castle when he was an infant.

Welsh, and it was Welsh we spoke always. Speaking English was a labour to us. My father was a poor man, truly honest; my mother was an excellent woman, passionate and strongminded; she ruled my father always, and continued to govern us all as long as she lived.

‘I owe much to my mother’s early instruction in truth and honesty. Lying, stealing, and drunkenness were crimes of which she impressed me with the utmost horror and disgust. A poor boy, engaged in carrying a gentleman’s letter-bag in our neighbourhood, stole a letter with money in it. I remember listening to the conversation of my father and mother on this subject; the grief and disgrace they painted in their description of the theft made a great impression on me. I remember also well a circumstance which was of the greatest importance to me, and ever inspired me with gratitude to my mother. One day I entered our home eating a cake; my mother’s quick eye fell upon it—she observed too that I made some attempt at concealment—so she questioned me. “Who gave you that?” I answered, “The woman in the street who sells cakes.” She went to the corner of the room, where a rod was kept, then took me by the hand and led me to the woman.

"Did you give this little boy a cake?" "No." Whereupon the rod was vigorously applied, in the presence of the people in the street who were looking on. My distress was great. At evening prayers my father, who had been informed of my disgrace, dwelt in a solemn manner on the sin I had committed—the great crime of theft and lies. That was my first theft, and my last.

' I will now relate my artistic beginnings. When about seven years old I began to admire the signs painted over alehouses, constantly gazing up at them with great admiration. One day I made my first attempt to draw from nature. My attention had been frequently attracted to a pretty scene—it was a line of geese, sailing upon the smooth glassy water. I drew the geese upon my father's casting slate, all in procession, every one in profile. When my father looked at my performance he smiled, but when my mother cast her eyes upon it she praised me, and said, "Indeed, Jack, this is very like the geese."

' I rubbed out that drawing, and, after dwelling upon the geese again, I drew them upon a larger scale, one behind the other, and again my mother praised me. Then I produced the same composition a third time, adding more geese, but

nothing new in the treatment. Then my mother thought she had had enough of the geese, and said, "Suppose you change the subject, and try to draw a horse." After gazing long and often upon a horse, at last I ventured to commit him to the slate. I drew him in profile, all by memory. This effort delighted my mother still more. I stuck to the horse, as I had done to the geese, always repeating the same view, till my mother had had enough of that too. "Now, Jack," she said, "put a man upon his back." I went out, and carefully watched men on horseback, and, returning home, produced an equestrian figure. I never thought of copying from the object itself, but always, after looking at it, drew from recollection.

'When I was nine years of age my father decided to join some Welsh people and emigrate to America. We arrived therefore at Liverpool to embark for the United States. But when my mother saw the great ships in the docks, she formed the most determined resolution never to put her foot in one of them. Accordingly my father was obliged to abandon his intention and settle down in Liverpool. A short time after I was put to a school there.

'My attention was now drawn to the windows

of the print shops, and daily did I return to gaze with wonder and admiration at the engravings exhibited in them. Soon I began to draw them. The following was my plan, for I had no money to purchase a print. I fixed all my attention upon one figure only, and, when it was well impressed on my mind, I hastened home and there sketched down the general action—then returned again and again to the shop window, and corrected my copy till it was finished. I continued this sort of practice for long—of course in the hours out of school—and this habit strengthened my memory wonderfully, so that I have throughout life retained the power, so important to an artist, of drawing from recollection. Whenever I have remarked any momentary action, whether in the street or in a drawing-room, I have been able, by impressing it on my mind at the moment, to sketch it a month after.

‘In the course of time I began to sell my drawings to the boys at school, which enabled me to purchase paper and colours. I made no profit, for my prices were small. There was a very amiable boy who was fond of me, and who was so amiable as always to admire my drawings. His father had presented him with a new prayer-

book, beautifully bound ; this gift, with sixpence from his mother, was for good conduct at school. The boy said to me, "Gibson, you know how much I like your drawings; if you will make me one, in colours, for the new prayer-book, I will give you the sixpence." At that time there was a fine print of Napoleon crossing the Alps, from David's picture, in one of the shop windows, which I had already copied in my peculiar way. I showed my copy to my patron ; he was charmed, and commissioned me to repeat the subject as a frontispiece to his prayer-book ! It was executed in bright colours, and he paid me the sixpence—the largest sum I had yet received for a work of art.

' I had been warned by my schoolmaster not to draw during school hours. Notwithstanding this prohibition, I was discovered one day, by the sentinel making his rounds, drawing at the desk. He shouted out, "Gibson is drawing!" the master thundered in return, "Bring Gibson up!" the sentinel said to me, "Obey!" and took me by the arm. I resisted violently. The master then ordered out reinforcements, and I soon received a castigation not to be forgotten—and I never drew again in school.

‘ There was a stationer’s shop in Church Street, kept by Mr. Tourmeau. It was there I purchased my paper and colours. One day Mr. Tourmeau said to me, “ My lad, you are a frequent customer ; I suppose you are a painter ? ” I answered with infinite self-consequence, “ Yes, sir, I paint.” He then told me to bring my drawings, and after saying something encouraging, asked me if I had ever seen an Academy drawing. I did not know what an Academy drawing meant ! The next day, for the first time, I saw drawings from the nude on coloured paper, in black and white chalk, done at the Royal Academy by Mr. Tourmeau. He kindly lent them to me to copy, and when I had made some progress, he added some small plaster casts from the antique, and I drew from them under his generous instructions.

‘ The time arrived when I was to be put to some mode of earning my bread. The portrait and miniature painters required a premium with a pupil, which my father could not afford to give. At the age of fourteen I was bound apprentice to Messrs. Southwell and Wilson, cabinet-makers. After remaining there one year I became quite disgusted with my employment, and succeeded in persuading my masters to change my indenture

and bind me to wood-carving—that is, to ornamenting furniture. I was delighted at first with this occupation, and during my home hours kept up my practice of carving from casts. When I had been at the wood-carving for nearly a year I became acquainted with a person from London who was a flower-carver in marble: his works enchanted me, and I became greatly excited. He presented me to Messrs. Francis, who had marble works on Brownlow Hill. They employed a Prussian workman to model and execute small figures—his name was Lüge—afterwards he became the head workman to Sir Francis Chantrey. No words can give an idea of the impression made on me by the models and works I saw there. In my leisure hours during the second year of my apprenticeship I modelled in clay, copying what casts I could procure. I soon began to feel the greatest contempt for my line of wood-carving, and I became very melancholy. One day I ventured to ask leave of Mr. Francis to copy in clay a small head of Bacchus by Mr. Lüge, which enchanted me with its beauty. When finished I brought my copy with the original to show Mr. Francis. He confessed that the copy was so exact that he could hardly distinguish one from the other.

But, at the same time, he gave me to understand that, having paid a large price to the Prussian for all the models in his place, he could not allow them to be copied, and that he should lend me no more. Such an unexpected reverse of fortune fell upon my ardent soul like the chill of death. I left him in unutterable depression of spirits. I told all my sad story to the person who had introduced me to Mr. Francis. At that time I had also made my first attempt in marble; it was a small head of Mercury, which I afterwards presented to Mrs. Vose, wife of a physician in Liverpool.

‘As Mr. Francis praised this attempt, the idea came into my mind to try and induce him to purchase my indenture from the cabinet-makers, and to serve the remainder of my seven years in the practice of sculpture. But my cabinet-makers refused to part with me on any terms; I was, they said, the most industrious lad they ever had; they even refused an offer of seventy pounds from the Messrs. Francis to give me up. I then fell upon a plan of emancipating myself. I continued to attend regularly at the working hours, but I did no work. They remonstrated with me in vain—praised my former industry, appealed to my grati-

tude for kindness; reminded me that they had often made me presents. I admitted that it was all true. They then told me that an apprentice might be imprisoned for neglecting his duty. I admitted that too. But my mind was made up—a sculptor and not a cabinet-maker I would be. “I will fight for it,” said I to myself, “and rather serve the remaining years in prison than continue at this disgusting wood-carving.”

‘Several days elapsed, and I kept up the fight, doing scarcely any work, though always regularly at my post. At length my master flew into a passion, called me an ungrateful scoundrel, and gave me a blow on the side of my head. It was with his open hand—not violently. I kept myself calm, and said with quiet determination, “I am quite prepared to go before the magistrate; I have nothing to say in my defence; I have made up my mind to stay in prison—yes—for years.” With so inflexible a martyr there was nothing to be done. At length the cabinet-makers were persuaded to accept the seventy pounds, and the happy day arrived when I found myself entered as an apprentice for sculpture to the Messrs. Francis.

‘Now I was truly happy—modelling, drawing, and executing works in marble. After some

months there came a tall, magnificent-looking old gentleman to the workshop ; his hair was white as snow, aquiline nose, thick brows ; and his manner was most benevolent. It was William Roscoe. The object of his visit was to order a chimney-piece for his library at Allerton. My models and numerous drawings were soon placed before him, and he said many encouraging things to me. In a few days Mr. Roscoe returned, and settled with my master about the chimney-piece ; then turning to me, he said he wished me to make a basso-rilievo for the centre—not in marble, but in baked clay (*terra cotta*)—from a print which he brought with him. He added, “ This print is of great value ; it is by Marc Antonio, from Raphael.” It represented Alexander ordering Homer’s “ *Iliad* ” to be placed in the casket taken from Darius—an excellent choice of subject for a library. The original fresco is in the Vatican, painted in *chiaroscuro*. I executed the work, which gave satisfaction, and it is preserved at this time in the Liverpool Institution. It is in a small room there, and over it is a portrait of Mr. Roscoe, and also one of myself painted at Rome by the late Mr. Geddes.

‘ Mr. Roscoe showed me great kindness, and I was invited once a week to Allerton—there he

opened all his portfolios, containing engravings from the old masters, and original drawings for which he had paid great sums. Some of these fine drawings he advised me to copy, so that I might learn to sketch in the same masterly way. I imitated them as closely as I could—some were in red chalk, others in pen and bistre. I also copied a few of Luca Cambiasi's bold reed pen sketches.

‘ Mr. Roscoe was a man of true taste. When I reflect on the past I often wonder at the accurate judgment he had acquired, when the minds of so many in England were astray about sculpture. Every design I now made was laid before him for his advice. The first thing he considered was whether the subject was expressed simply and clearly, whether the figures moved and acted naturally, with truth of character, and just expression. Also he had great discrimination as to the selection of subjects.

‘ Having thus free access to Mr. Roscoe's fine collections, I became well acquainted with the inventions of Michael Angelo and Raphael, and the genius of the former began to have an influence over me. Before I was nineteen I began to think of a large cartoon. The subject was the fall of

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Satan and his angels. I first drew the design on a small scale, which went through numerous changes before I was satisfied. It included several groups and single figures foreshortened in various ways, and falling in every direction I could think of, and was executed in light and shade with pen and bistre. My mode of proceeding was this: I modelled the principal groups and figures in clay and hung them up with a string; then taking the view I wanted, I got them in as far as possible from nature, and traced the drawing upon the cartoon until the design was complete. The upper figures were lighted naturally from above, and for the lower groups, supposed to be lighted by the flames of hell, I placed a lamp beneath my clay models, and thus got a correct and beautiful effect. This laborious early performance is also favoured with a place in the Liverpool Institution.

‘About the same time I made some designs from Dante—one represents a figure nearly life size, tormented by a serpent. The action is difficult, and I studied every part of it from nature. It is highly finished in black chalk. The cartoon is in the possession of Mr. Mayer, a goldsmith at Liverpool. When after an absence of twenty-seven years from England I saw these early works

again, I felt surprised that I could have done them in a town where there was no Academy, and no real art going on. For Mr. Francis, my new master, was no artist, nor had he anyone in his workshop who could teach me my profession, for he had dismissed the Prussian and put me in his place. He paid me six shillings a week, but he received good prices for my works.'

To such works also the master gave his own name. For instance, in Sefton Church, seven miles from Liverpool, there is a bas-relief of considerable power, representing Mr. Blundell distributing alms, which has always been traditionally assigned to a sculptor of the name of Francis. Gibson happened to visit this church late in life, in the company of friends, and recognised a performance of his own. Many such are doubtless scattered about Liverpool and the neighbourhood under the name of Francis. To continue the biography.

'I should have mentioned that before this time Mr. Roscoe had urged upon me the study of anatomy from the subject itself. Knowing what an anatomist Michael Angelo was, I was most eager to begin. Dr. Vose of Liverpool was giving lectures on anatomy to young surgeons at that

time, and he generously admitted me into his school gratis. With his instruction, and close devotion to the dissecting-room, I became well versed in the construction of the human body, and could detect at a glance any anatomical error in a work of art.

‘My kind patron Mr. Roscoe gave me serious advice from time to time as to the course necessary to become a sculptor. He used to say, “No one can be a greater admirer of Michael Angelo than I am; but, if you are to be a sculptor, I must remind you that there is but one road to excellence, and that is the road trodden for you by the Greeks, who carried the art to the highest perfection. Michael Angelo with all his powerful genius missed the purity of the Greeks. But it is their principles established from Nature which you should endeavour to imbibe. The works of the ancients will teach you how to select the scattered beauties displayed in Nature. The Greek statue is Nature in the abstract, therefore when we contemplate those sublime works we feel elevated.”

‘When I returned to England after an absence of twenty-seven years, and saw the works of British sculptors in London, I perceived that the influence of English painters had been injurious to them,

leading them from a pure and elevated style to a soft, smooth prettiness, and pictorial treatment in attitude and arrangement which are not adapted for marble. If they had followed such advice as I received from Mr. Roscoe their works would have acquired a higher character and aim.

‘ I began now to study all casts, gems, and prints from the antique that I could get at, and the result was that I modelled a Psyche, life size, under these new impressions.* She was represented admiring a butterfly, and this attempt was greatly approved. But I could not pursue the study of the Beautiful without the participation of women. And this leads me to speak of a family with whom I then became acquainted. The family of Mr. Solomon d'Aguilar was one of the most polished in Liverpool. Mrs. d'Aguilar was the handsomest old lady I ever saw in my life; she had been a celebrated beauty. The late General d'Aguilar was their son, and they had two daughters, Mrs. Lawrence and Mrs. Robinson.’

The d'Aguilar family, by their hospitality and love of art, and by that gift of beauty to which Gibson was ever impressionable, played a con-

* Exhibited at the first exhibition of modern works of art opened at Liverpool.

spicuous part in his early life. With Mrs. Lawrence Gibson kept up an occasional correspondence, from which we shall make extracts further on. But his warmest friendship was contracted with Mrs. Robinson, who was a lady of great personal charms, and taste for the arts. She devoted herself to the cultivation of Gibson's mind, making him acquainted with standard works in poetry, and leading him to a class of reading which greatly contributed to enrich his ideas. This lady died in 1829.

'John Kemble used to come to Liverpool, and the d'Aguilars were his great friends. They brought him to see my works, and I felt much encouraged by all he said. He greatly admired a small figure of a seated Mercury which my brother Solomon was then modelling, and I can truly say that it was a remarkable work for a boy of sixteen. The figure is sitting, but you feel that Mercury will be up in a moment and lost in the skies. When the late Lord Colborne was in Holland he observed this little figure in bronze in a curiosity shop; but the shopman could not tell him who the author was, or where it had been cast. He purchased it at once. Dining with his Lordship in 1851 he showed me the Mercury, and I told

him it was by my brother, and all about how John Kemble had admired it when still in the clay.

‘John Kemble, then performing in Liverpool, was requested by the d’Aguilars to sit to me for a small bust. I went to his lodgings for that purpose. As he sat, he held a looking-glass in his hand, looking at his own face and correcting me. He approved much of the bust, and so did Mrs. Siddons to whom he subsequently presented me, and so also did Sir Thos. Lawrence. I sold many casts of it to his numerous admirers. Mine is the only bust, modelled from that great actor. During these sittings John Kemble conversed with me very freely and very kindly. I told him how much his acting and his statue-like appearance on the stage had impressed me—his agility of action in *Rolla*, and his sedate grandeur in *Cato*. I confessed that at times when witnessing pathetic parts I was harassed by my feelings, and yet ashamed of giving way to them. “Ah! my boy,” he said, “never contend with your feelings. Better give way.” One day speaking of expression he said that genius is expressed by the eye, feeling by the large dilating nostril, and temper by the mouth. I observed as he spoke that his own countenance illustrated this. He was a magnificent

man, with the grandest head I ever saw, a striking figure, and wonderfully expressive face.

‘As time advanced Mr. Roscoe consulted with his friends as to some plan of sending me to Rome, for he looked upon the Eternal City as the great University of Sculpture, both on account of its splendid collections, and of the great assemblage of artists from all parts of Europe. Such suggestions from him inflamed my soul with ambition. Rome was ever in my thoughts, and I became harassed with anxiety, often sleepless. “Mother,” said I, “last night I dreamt a dream (she could interpret dreams)—I dreamt that I was wandering in solitary meditation, when a great eagle darted down upon me, and took me up in the air. Higher and higher he flew with me over towns and rivers, till I lost sight of the earth, and I saw nothing but clouds. Fear was upon me, when the earth began to reappear and I felt myself descending. Presently I saw buildings below me, and soon the eagle alighted in the midst of a great city; and this, I said to myself in my dream, *this is Rome.*” “Jack,” said my mother, after a deep thinking, “as sure as thou art now sitting before me, thy fate will carry thee over every difficulty to Rome.” I must own that I had lost faith in the interpreta-

tion of dreams, but I did not question my mother's powers in this instance.

'I continued to practice my art upon those principles which Mr. Roscoe had advocated—all was Greek simplicity, and purity of form. The works of Flaxman in outlines now began to delight me. I admired the beauty and purity of his female figures and the lofty character of his heroes. Although he formed his style upon the Greek vases, his designs are full of original conceptions.

'I now made a drawing of Psyche carried by two Zephyrs, and afterwards modelled the design in basso-rilievo, and finished it very highly. Then I took courage and sent it to the Royal Academy Exhibition. This was my first work seen there. Mr. Flaxman knew nothing of me, but he looked on my basso-rilievo with such kindness that he obtained a conspicuous place for it near a window, with a beautiful light.

'One of the last works I executed, while still in the service of the Messrs. Francis, was for the late Sir John Gladstone, father of the eminent statesman, who at that time resided in Liverpool. He came to my master and ordered a costly chimney-piece. On the side I executed two female

figures in alto-rilievo, which satisfied Sir John so well that he presented me with ten guineas. That chimney-piece, I have been told, was taken by him to Scotland.

‘All this time I was very restless and uneasy in mind ; for, in proportion as the charm of a pure classical style dawned more and more upon me, did I feel the longing to go forth into the great world of art, and to come in contact with rivals. For it is only by comparing ourselves with others that we advance and gain victories. In Liverpool I felt like one chained down by the leg, panting for liberation ; ever longing to join in the race for the green branch—the laurel crown. Meanwhile Mr. Roscoe’s bank had failed ; my other friends were not rich, and the wealthy in Liverpool did not then concern themselves much about art.

‘Early in the year 1817 I left Liverpool for London. Once London had been the goal of my ambition ; now my soul was all on fire for a higher flight. Golden Hope inspired me and pointed to the Capitol. I had a letter to Mr. Brougham (Lord Brougham) and to Mr. Christie the auctioneer, a man of classical learning and pure taste in art. This gentleman examined my drawings, of which I took a great roll with me. To Mr.

Christie I was indebted for an introduction to Mr. Watson Taylor, then one of the most liberal patrons of art. After looking at my drawings Mr. Watson Taylor expressed his desire that I should model a bust of himself. This I completed to his satisfaction and that of his lady, who pronounced it to be a more pleasing likeness than one lately modelled by Mr. Chantrey. They then requested me to execute the bust in marble. This was the first commission I received after leaving Liverpool. My success with Mr. Watson Taylor's bust led to an order to model one of Mrs. Watson Taylor. She was a nice quiet woman, and I did my best to do her justice. Then I had commissions from them for all the children in turn, ending with the baby—a little thing with no shape at all.

‘ But the greatest favour of all on Mr. Watson Taylor's part was a commission to execute for him a bust of Mr. Roscoe. I therefore returned to Liverpool, and had the honour and pleasure of several sittings from my excellent patron. Subsequently the bust was executed in marble for Mr. Watson Taylor in Rome. I also made a repetition of it for myself, which, ten years later, I presented, as a tribute of gratitude, to the Liverpool

Royal Institution. After the model of Mr. Roscoe was completed I hastened back to London, bearing letters of introduction to Mr. Fuseli, to Mr. Flaxman, to Benjamin West, and others. From Mr. Flaxman I received much kindness. He inspected my drawings and complimented me upon them, and also on the *Pysche* carried by Zephyrs, which had been in the Exhibition. From him too I received the strongest encouragement to proceed to Rome, as the best school in Europe for a young sculptor. I also showed my drawings to Mr. Fuseli and to Mr. West—President of the Royal Academy—who said, “There is that in them which labour can never attain.” I made also the acquaintance of Mr. Blake, who showed me his cartoons and complained sadly of the want of feeling in England for high art. His wife joined in with him; she was very bitter upon the subject. Mr. Chantrey I did not see, but went round his studio. Mr. Watson Taylor, however, talked to him about my plan of going to Rome, which Mr. Chantrey disapproved, saying that there was everything in London requisite for the education of a sculptor, and that I might go to Rome later. Mr. Watson Taylor inclined to this view himself, and promised to do all in his power to

advance me in London. My means, it is true, were limited, and any prospect of increasing the sum of 150*l.* which my friends at Liverpool had got together for me was tempting; but when I remembered my dream of the eagle and my mother's prediction I resolved not to loiter too long on the way, but to trust to fortune and depart. One day therefore I informed Mr. Watson Taylor that the time was drawing near for me to start on my journey. He urged my staying to execute Mrs. Watson Taylor's bust and his own in marble, but I requested his permission to send on the models to Rome and execute them there. Still he thought that I might stay in London, till at length I said that go to Rome I would, if I went there on foot. He remarked that I was very decided indeed.

CHAPTER III.

Departure for Rome—Madame Pasta—Canova's Liberality—Introduced at Canova's Academy—Education of a Sculptor at Rome—"The Sleeping Shepherd"—Commissions from Duke of Devonshire and Sir George Beaumont—Happiness at Rome—Sir Watkin Williams Wynn.

I LEFT England for Rome in September, 1817. A gentleman whose acquaintance I had made in London, Mr. Bonomi, procured for me a letter of introduction to Mr. Bartolozzi, then residing in Paris with his daughter, Madame Vestris : she was ill in bed, and I did not see her, but he was remarkably kind to me, taking me about the place. I could not speak any language but English and Welsh ; the latter, however, was of no use to me in Paris.

'In the course of a few days Mr. Bartolozzi found a Roman vetturino who was about to return to Rome, which was a fortunate circumstance for me. I was further so fortunate as to share the carriage with a young Scotchman of the name of Graham. This gentleman had a servant with him who spoke English, French, and Italian, and he

took care of me as well as of his master in the way of interpretation. There was also another vettura which kept company with us as far as Milan, and in that was Madame Pasta with her young husband and her mother.'

We have often heard Mr. Gibson describe this grand and truly Italian lady, then just commencing her distinguished career; how she would pour forth her glorious voice in snatches of song as they walked up and down the hills, and how she would occasionally exert it too in scolding her husband, 'which,' he used to add, 'impressed me with a profound conviction of the resources of the Italian language for such feminine purposes.'

'When we arrived at Florence, my companion, Mr. Graham, remained there, and I proceeded on my way in the vettura, which had been joined by an Italian gentleman who spoke a little English.

'On the 20th October, 1817, I arrived in Rome, and my mother's interpretation of my dream was fulfilled.

'I had a letter to the Abbé Hamilton, which I presented immediately, and found him a very good-natured old man. He volunteered to accompany me to Canova, to whom I had letters from Mr. Fuseli, Lord Brougham, and General

d'Aguilar. When the hour came I felt anxious and agitated at the thought of seeing the greatest living sculptor. We arrived at his studio, walked through rooms crowded with his scholars, and were soon in the presence of the great man, to whom the Abbé presented me. He received me most kindly, and examined some drawings I had brought with me with great attention. Then he said, "I wish you to come to me alone next Sunday morning, for I want to talk with you."

'When Sunday morning arrived I repaired to the studio, where I found Canova surrounded with a crowd of young artists, some showing their designs, others talking to him. He gave me to understand that he should soon have done with these visitors; and when they were gone he invited me into an inner room. There, in his very bad English, he began to explain that many young artists came to Rome with very small means, and that he assumed might be my case. He therefore requested me to allow him the gratification of assisting me with the means of prosecuting my studies to the best advantage. "I am rich," he said; "I am anxious to be of use to you, and to forward you in your art as long as you stay in Rome."

‘I was taken by surprise, and felt it difficult to find words to express my grateful feelings. It appears that General d’Aguilar in his letter had mentioned the limited nature of my means, and had requested Canova to put me upon the most economical mode of study. I tried to explain to him that my kind patron, Mr. Watson Taylor, had increased my means a little, and then I plucked up courage and asked whether I might venture to look to him for instruction, saying that it was my highest ambition to be his pupil, and to model in his studio. To all this Canova replied in the most encouraging terms, and told me to look to him for everything that might be in his power.

‘I need not say that this interview delighted me, while his gentle manners, his deep sonorous voice, and his very finely formed features, made an impression on me which time has never lessened. Dear generous master! I see you before me now. I hear your soft Venetian dialect, and your kindly words inspiring my efforts, and gently correcting my defects. Yes, my heart still swells with grateful recollection of you.

‘He told me to make use of a few days to inspect the sights of Rome, but I answered that I

should be in his studio the next morning, and so I was.

‘Up to this period I had received instruction from no master, nor had I studied in any academy. At my own request Canova allowed me to copy his fine Pugilist—the marble statue in the Vatican. I began with great zeal to model my copy from the cast in the studio. After I had worked at the clay for a few days, down it all fell ! It seems that my master had observed to his foreman, Signor Desti, that my figure must fall ; “for you see,” said he, “that he knows nothing of the skeleton work—but let him proceed, and when his figure comes down, show him how the mechanical part is done.” So when my model fell, a blacksmith was called in, and the iron work made, with numerous crosses of wood and wire. Such a proceeding I had never before seen. One of his pupils then put up the clay upon the iron skeleton and roughed out the model before me, so that the figure was firm as a rock. After this I worked indefatigably on my copy.*

‘When it was finished my master said that he considered me competent to model at the Academy from the life. There was the Academy of

* Now in Mr. Penry Williams’s possession.

St. Luke's, and there was also Canova's academy, to which he only admitted such as he thought promising, including students from all parts of Italy. The expense of this school was defrayed by the Emperor of Austria, but Canova attended it twice a week, overlooking and correcting the students, and received no remuneration for his trouble.

'Canova introduced me himself into this academy. At that time a youth of extraordinary beauty was sitting as a model. When his time of rest came, my master said to him, "*alzatevi.*" Up sprang the youth. "*L'Apollo Belvedere,*" said Canova; and in a moment he had assumed the action and expression of the Apollo—the lofty air, the dilated nostril, and the slight disdain and anger of the mouth. It was perfect. I spoke out my delight at the beauty and grace of the figure before us; he was like the statue come to life. Canova said he believed a more beautiful youth did not exist. Again he cried out "*Il Mercurio,*" and like as with the touch of a wand the young man was in the spirited attitude of the Mercury of John of Bologna. Then, of his own accord, he assumed the position of some of Canova's own beautiful statues.

‘I now began to model from the life in this school, and my master advised me to look frequently at the productions of my fellow-students there, from the beginning to the end of the work. I did so, and most improving it was to me. They were all very polite, and sorry that I did not understand Italian. But when I observed the power and experience of youths much younger than myself, their masterly manner of sketching in the figure and their excellent imitation of nature, my spirits fell many degrees, and I felt humbled and unhappy. How I regretted that I had not come to Rome much earlier in life. In this mood when I returned at night to my lonely lodgings I sighed deeply, and my gloomy thoughts flew back to the past—to those happy evenings of the readings with Mrs. Robinson—the books, the drawings, the quiet tea-table, the arranged flowers.

‘To return to my subject. One of the great advantages I subsequently derived from residing in Rome was the listening to conversations on art, not only between Canova and Thorwaldsen, but between artists of talent from all countries. In Rome all the studios are open to each other, every man sees another’s works, and holds free

communion with him, giving and receiving advice, and carrying on the labour of art by a combination of minds. On my return to England how surprised was I to find that none of the sculptors visit each other in this way, nor does one sculptor consult another in the process of a work. This isolation is one reason I believe for the errors in public works, though some of them show talent and power. To advance sculpture in England it is necessary that the artists should come in contact with each other, and also, if possible, with artists from other countries. It may be said with truth that an Englishman does not require to leave his own land to become a poet, for he can gather together the efforts of other and great minds in his own room. But it is different with the sculptor, who must know what others have done and are doing, hear their opinions, examine their works, and enlarge his perceptions by communion with others labouring in the same path.

‘Another great advantage found in Rome is that art is more generally understood. There, any quack who puffs himself up is known to be a quack; while in England, art not being understood by the masses, men of very mediocre powers are constantly pushed forward and exalted as

geniuses, and the public are kept in ignorance. If there were any individuals of real judgment and taste who would point out the beauties or defects of certain works it would be very instructive, but generally speaking the English are led by the newspapers, whose remarks are useless, or worse, to the artist in the sense of criticism. An illustration of this will be found in the following anecdote, which I know to be a fact. A young man produced a work of a novel character in sculpture, which brought him into notice. He continued to work in England, and was then sent to Rome by his patrons, who, by his own account, and lest the sight of other works should interfere with his own new style of sculpture, laid a strict injunction on him not to enter a studio there. The young man gave a satisfactory proof of his incapacity and absence of all feeling for art by adhering strictly to these rules, refusing even to enter the studio of Thorwaldsen. He and his patrons must have looked upon sculpture as a plaything rather than as an art subject to rules which cannot be infringed. There can be no greater absurdity than to suppose that an inexperienced youth should be able to invent a new style in sculpture! It is only ignorance which

attaches a stronger interest to novelty than to truth; the Greeks had very different ideas.

‘Canova now gave me to understand that the sooner I began to model a figure, life size, of my own invention, the better.’ He therefore advised me to take a studio, and his foreman found one close to his own, so that he was the better able to superintend me.

‘Among the clay sketches which I had been composing was one of a sleeping boy, which Canova suggested my executing life size. I set to work, and, as it advanced, he often came and corrected me, and made remarks which were invaluable to me. I called the subject “The Sleeping Shepherd,” putting a crook by his side, and I copied nature pretty closely, for the figure admitted of the imitation of individual life. Soon a higher class of subject began to haunt me, and I showed my master sketches of several groups; but he advised me to keep to a single figure, until I had acquired more knowledge in style, and experience of form. He was quite right, for it is a very common mistake with young artists to begin with groups before they have conquered the difficulties of the figure. Although the style of Canova was not altogether pure, his judgment and advice were

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excellent. He used often to say to me, "Take care not to copy my works, study the Greeks." He also always advised me to go frequently to the studios of other sculptors, "and especially go as often as you can to that of Thorwaldsen, he is a very great artist."

' In the year 1819 I began to model my group of Mars and Cupid, seven feet high, and, having fine living models before me, worked upon it with great spirit. I went often to contemplate the Greek statues, not actually copying them, which Canova did not encourage, but drawing outlines from them in order to learn the delicacy and beauty of their lines. I also drew legs and arms and torsos separately and rather large. I worked many months at my Mars and Cupid, and one day, when it was much advanced, I heard a knocking at my studio door; I opened it, and in came a tall, fine-looking young man. He said, "The Duke of Devonshire—Canova sent me to see what you are doing." I felt a little confused, but when I calmed down I got on well with his grace. After examining Mars for some time he asked me what might be the cost of the group in marble. I answered that, not having experience, I could not tell. "Think," said he, "and tell me." After

pondering a little I ventured to name five hundred pounds; "but perhaps I have said too much." "Oh no, not too much," said the Duke. He then commissioned me to execute the group in marble at the price named. I was delighted, and when he was gone ran over to Canova and told him all. My master was greatly pleased, but, when I mentioned the price which I had proposed at random to the Duke, he expressed his regret that I had not consulted him first, for he considered that the expense of marble and workmanship would alone cost at least the five hundred pounds. This proved to be the case; for when the work was completed it had cost me five hundred and twenty pounds, reckoning nothing for the time I had spent upon the clay, and subsequently upon the marble.

'This group of Mars and Cupid is at Chatsworth, and it was the first commission I received at Rome.

'At that period—1820—Sir Francis Chantrey came to Rome. Canova mentioned me to him, and he paid me a visit in my little studio in the Via Fontanella. He asked me how long I had been in Rome. I said three years. He then observed, "One three years is enough to spoil you, or any other man." I asked him whether he

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thought I was in a bad school, to which he made no reply.

‘On the 13th of October, 1822, the great and good Canova died at Venice. Many were those who suffered by his loss. To the needy student he liberally gave money, and to all valuable instruction. I received constant lessons from him for five years.’

It was nineteen years afterwards—May, 1841—that Gibson wrote as follows to Mrs. Sandbach, of Canova and Thorwaldsen: ‘May I not be proud to have known such men, to have conversed with them, watched all their proceedings, heard all their great sentiments on art? Is it not a pleasure to be so deeply in their debt for instruction? Posterity will do us all justice.’ Of Thorwaldsen he speaks more, as we shall see, further on.

‘In 1821 I began to model my group of Psyche and the Zephyrs, which Canova encouraged me to execute. In that winter—1821-2—Sir George Beaumont came to Rome. Canova sent him to see my clay group, which was much advanced, and the old gentleman often came, watching my progress. At last he asked what would be the price of the work in marble. This time I was more cautious. I said I would put a moderate

price on it, and let him know. So when he next came I was prepared, and named seven hundred pounds, upon which, to my great delight, he ordered the group in marble. Canova and Sir George sent most of the visitors then in Rome to my studio, and Sir George and Lady Beaumont often invited me to their house. That winter also the Duke of Devonshire returned to Rome, and came to see what I was doing. Among my drawings done in Liverpool was one I had given to Mrs. Robinson, representing the meeting of Hero and Leander. I had a repetition of the drawing with me in Rome, and it was a favourite with Canova, who advised me to model it. I asked him whether it was an objection that the face of the woman was hid upon the shoulder of her lover—not seen—and he said that it was not, for it was most natural so. “It is full of passion,” he said, “and you must make a basso-rilievo from it.” I followed his advice, and took the greatest pains with the model. The Duke of Devonshire now observed it in my studio, and told me that Canova had mentioned it to him. So he ordered it in marble, and it is now at Chatsworth.

‘I was much elated by the commission Sir George Beaumont had given me, for he was

reputed one of the best judges of art in England. He evidently did not think like Sir Francis Chantrey that Rome would spoil me. No—Rome, above all other cities, has a peculiar influence upon and charm for the real student; he feels himself in the very university of art, where it is the one thing talked about and thought about. Constantly did I feel the presence of this influence. Every morning I rose with the sun, my soul gladdened by a new day of a happy and delightful pursuit; and as I walked to my breakfast at the Caffè Greco and watched with new pleasure the tops of the churches and palaces gilt by the morning sun, I was inspired with a sense of daily renovated youth, and fresh enthusiasm, and returned joyfully to the combat, to the invigorating strife with the difficulties of art. Nor did the worm of envy creep round my heart whenever I saw a beautiful idea skilfully executed by any of my young rivals, but constantly spurred on by the talent around me I returned to my studio with fresh resolution.

‘I had for some time been intending to make a statue of the very finely formed youth to whom I have alluded at the academy, and decided to make a figure of Paris from him. I began it in

1819, and Mr. Watson Taylor hearing of my progress at Rome commissioned me to execute it for him. The progress of this work was much delayed by the marble turning out defective; I therefore procured a new block and began it over again in 1824. In that year also Lord George Cavendish came to Rome, and visited my studio. He admired my Sleeping Shepherd-boy, and eventually ordered it in marble. I find by a letter from Lord George that the statue arrived in London in November 1825.

In May 1826 Mr. Haldimand came to Rome. I was then engaged in modelling a group of three figures, representing the youth Hylas surprised by the nymphs at the fountain. He seemed much taken with it, and before he left Rome honoured me by ordering it in marble. Mr. Haldimand afterwards changed his residence from England to Geneva. From the latter place he wrote to me signifying his desire to be allowed to relinquish the group he had ordered. This he did on very liberal terms. I afterwards sold it to the late Mr. Vernon, whose collection by his bequest has become public property.

‘ In the same winter—1826—the late Sir Watkin Williams Wynn came to Rome. Having heard

that I was a native of Conway he made up his mind that I should execute a work for him, and that it should be an eagle in marble. As he made this discouraging proposition we stood before my group of Psyche borne by the Zephyrs, of which he expressed great admiration. But what could I think of his admiration when he added, "If you take away the Psyche and put in her place a time-piece, it will make a capital design for a clock." When I found him thus beginning to change my compositions according to his own taste, I lost all hopes of him. He said, "Then you don't care about doing an eagle for me?" I replied, "No, Sir Watkin, that is out of my way." I then directed his attention to a model of Cupid drawing his bow, which I was then designing. He asked me whether I would like to do that for him better than the eagle. I replied that I certainly should, and so it was settled. The old gentleman and his sister, Miss Williams Wynn, were exceedingly kind to me during their stay in Rome.

'On May 12th, 1826, I had the honour of being elected an honorary member of the Pontifical Academy at Bologna.

‘ In the year 1827 my group of Psyche and the Zephyrs was exhibited at the Royal Academy. This took place after the death of Sir George Beaumont, who died without having seen it.’

CHAPTER IV.

Preference for Rome over London—Elected Member of St. Luke's Academy—Thorwaldsen and his Danish Baroness—Camuccini—"Love disguised as Shepherd"—Election as Associate to Royal Academy—"The Hunter and Dog"—The Streets of Rome—The Aurora—Michael Angelo—Classical Costume.

ABOUT this time Gibson's friends began to urge upon him the expediency of returning to England, where the death of Flaxman and the quietude of Chantrey, who had made his fortune, left an opening in the ranks of sculptors. Mr. Watson Taylor especially drew his attention to these facts, adding, 'But you must be the best judge whether Gibson of Rome or Gibson of London would be the more considerable personage.' 'I had at this time been ten years at Rome. I felt that by my progress in the race which I was running I had left some of my young rivals (Italians) behind me. As I advanced my ambition for fame only became stronger and stronger. "Go to London?" thought I; "No—what is local fame? If I live I will try for more than that. I may fail—yes—but Rome shall be

my battle-field, where I am surrounded, by the most powerful competitors. In England my life would be spent in making busts and statues of great men in coats and neckties; here I am employed upon poetical subjects which demand the exercise of the imagination, and the knowledge of the beautiful. My countrymen have often observed to me that in England I might become a rich man—my reply has always been that I have no use for wealth, for my wants are very few, and my greatest happiness is the study of my art."

'In the year 1829 Camuccini, the historical painter, suggested to Thorwaldsen to propose to the Academy of St. Luke's to elect me as a member. The sculptor Massimiliano had died, and his place was to be filled. Thorwaldsen and Camuccini worked hard to have me chosen in his room. The white balls were more numerous than the black ones, and I was elected Resident Academician of merit.

'It is time for me to acknowledge the great obligations I owe to the late Cavaliere Thorwaldsen. He, like Canova, was most generous in his kindness to young artists, visiting all who requested his advice. I profited greatly by the

knowledge which this splendid sculptor had of his art. On every occasion when I was modelling a new work he came to me, and corrected whatever he thought amiss. I also often went to his studio and contemplated his glorious works, always in the noblest style, full of pure and severe simplicity. His studio was a safe school for the young, and was the resort of artists and lovers of art from all nations. The old man's person can never be forgotten by those who saw him. Tall and strong—he never lost a tooth in his life—he was most venerable looking. His kind countenance was marked with hard thinking, his eyes were grey, and his white locks lay upon his broad shoulders. At great assemblies his breast was covered with orders.'

There is something which lifts us above this scheming and pushing world when we consider Rome at the time when these three remarkable men—Canova the Venetian, Thorwaldsen the Dane, and Gibson the Welshman—reigned thus harmoniously together. Doubtless the high nobility of tone in this respect was given by the gentle Canova who reigned at first alone, and hailed every worthy rival in his art as a friend. One would fain seek the solution of this edifying

spectacle in that devotion to art whence ennobling influences are perhaps oftener expected than found. Thorwaldsen, like Gibson, as we have hinted before, showed a greater sympathy with the genius of antique art than did their softer southern brother. Both especially stand unrivalled in that Shibboleth of the true sculptor—basso-rilievo—which Canova never successfully disputed with them. It is said of Thorwaldsen that, on first coming to Rome, where he was sent and well nigh starved^{!!} upon a small allowance from the Copenhagen Academy, for three years, he wandered about among the statues of gods and heroes like a man in a dream. He was all life long like a man in a dream, caring for nothing beyond his art, though adored by his countrymen—in which all Germans are reckoned—fêted by the great, and receiving his full share of caressing interest and flattery from the softer sex who think that genius especially demands their care.

There are passages and descriptions regarding the great Danish sculptor in Gibson's letters to Mrs. Sandbach which we cannot do better than give here, though anticipating the narrative in point of date. Mrs. Sandbach had also con-

tributed her share of incense in an ode which is subjoined.* After a residence in Rome of forty-

* Sons of art ! in joyful lay
Proclaim aloud a festive day !
Let the songs of triumph sound
Through the classic air around ;
Behold Thorwaldsen comes !
Back to the ancient home
Of his great art,
Behold the master comes !
Again he enters Rome,
No more to part.

See he comes, with honours crown'd,
Rich in fame, adored, renown'd !
Time with gentle hand has shed
Silvery tokens o'er his head ;
Yet from his native shore
He bends his steps once more
To southern clime.
Pour, Sons of Art ! then pour
O'er the propitious hour
A strain sublime.

The glorious ' City of the Soul '
Is the sculptor's destined goal ;
His adopted country, where
He may breathe a native air.
Shall his free spirit own
A mortal birth alone ?
No ! 'tis divine.
Genius has raised a throne,
And bid him sit thereon.
Rome ! he is thine.

Apollo ! tune thy sleeping lyre,
And touch the chords with raptured fire ;
Spirit of beauty ! join the song,
And pour the echoing notes along.
He who has worshipped thee
Thy votary still shall be ;

one years Thorwaldsen had paid a visit to his native land in 1838, and there reaped the ovation which the glory his fame shed upon it merited. But he had also escaped from the jealous arms of the Fatherland and had returned to the home of his adoption, though, as the sequel proved, not for long. Although once more in Rome, Danish fetters were upon him. A countrywoman of his own—a Baroness von Stampe—known as his generous hostess during the three years he had spent in Denmark,¹ accompanied him to Rome. She was devoted, resolute, and middle-aged; and while Thorwaldsen had, as he thought, been the means of bringing her to Rome, she intended to be the means of taking him back to Copenhagen. For this end she laboured with truly feminine ingenuity. As it was impossible, by any defects in domestic arrangements, to render Thorwaldsen uncomfortable—for he was the most disorderly and untidy of men—she set about to

Then shalt thou honour him, and twine
A chaplet for his brow benign
Of fadeless hue.
Rise to meet him,
Haste to greet him,
Give him welcome home;
Sons of Art! with one glad heart
Welcome Thorwaldsen home!

make him too much the reverse, by introducing reforms in his own slatternly establishment, for which he had little relish and less gratitude.

Gibson gives an amusing account in a letter to Mrs. Sandbach (4th December 1841) of a visit he paid at this time to the grand old man.

‘Your letter containing the corrected ode on Thorwaldsen’s return came in time, as I had not given him the first one. . . . On Sunday morning I doubled up the ode and placed it in your little volume of poems. I then went to Thorwaldsen, not having seen him for weeks. He was ill. After waiting a little I was told by the maid to proceed on. I had never seen a maid-servant there before, and as I went through the rooms I observed order and cleanliness which were equally as strange. The Baroness met me—Thorwaldsen’s countrywoman—who has come from Copenhagen with him. He had brought her before to my studio, and she welcomed me gladly, and conducted me to his bedroom, where she sat at her needlework.* “Ha! I am so glad to see you,” said he, giving me both hands. Nothing could

* It is usual with Lutheran ladies to carry on the same occupations on Sundays as on week-days.

be more benign. We sat down three together—the Baronessa, the old Cavaliere, and myself. There was not only reform in all the rooms, but the old man himself was made new. A new green velvet cap, beautifully worked and ornamented—a superb dressing-gown—Turkish slippers—his large person—strong deep expression—his silvery hair, his glittering gold earrings—he looked like a grandee of Persia; no longer the careless, clay-bedaubed Thorwaldsen, in the midst of confusion. What meddling creatures women are! thought I. “Gibson,” said he, “I am ill, and these doctors torment my life out. Here is a blister on my breast, and one on my arm, you see. I have no patience with them. Illness is come now upon me. Ha! it is old age!” He drooped his head, closed his fist, compressed his lips, and there was a dead silence. Said I, “Cavaliere! during your absence from Rome I had the pleasure of bringing to your studio a patron of mine, with his lady. She is a poetess, and a great admirer of your works. My Hunter is for him, and she has written this ode on your return to Rome. I present it to you; she does not think it worthy, but I hope you will give it a place among your papers.” The Baroness said, “Is it in English?” and instantly

got it out of his hand, and to my surprise began to read it : and after reading on said, " Oh ! Thorwaldsen, I will translate all this poetry into our own language." Said I, " She has written verses on his Christ—here they are." Then I gave her the little book, and she read and read, here and there, and then I offered to lend her the book to read at her leisure. He was very silent, and I said, " My friend is pretty." He smiled and said, " Bella ?" " Bellina," said I. The Baronessa laughed and said, " Truly there is beauty in the poetry." I did not dare to say that you were young too, for the Baroness is at least fifty. She speaks French and Italian very well, and is very rich, and has taken a sort of enthusiastic attachment to Thorwaldsen, and is with him ever and everywhere. Her husband is here, but I have not seen him. It was at her villa that Thorwaldsen designed and modelled several works for his King during the three years he was absent. He is entirely under the power of this lady now. She writes all his letters, attends to all his business, regulates his domestic affairs. They say here that he will never be free again, and I am very sorry to tell you what she said to Mr. Benjamin the other day, that she intends taking Thorwald-

sen back to Copenhagen never more to return to Rome, and that the King will send two frigates for all his works in his studio. "If it were not for this lady he would end his days in Rome among his enemies and friends.

'It is now ten days since this visit, and last night I had the pleasure of meeting him at dinner at Lady Braye's—pretty well recovered. I said, "I hope you will never go back to your own country, but spend your life at Rome among us." He drooped his head, and did not say one word.'

Again, in a letter to Mrs. Sandbach (January 25, 1842), 'Thorwaldsen was here a few days ago with his Baroness. She brought me back your little volume, and said flattering things. He, looking at your bust, said, "Who is this?" I told him, and then turning to her he remarked, "You see at once that this is a head of talent." It is lucky you are not here just now, for I fear you would be flirting with Thorwaldsen, and she would be jealous of you, and I should be jealous of him, and your husband would settle us both. He said to me, "You should go to England and take the place of Chantrey." Said I, "In which place do you think I could produce the best works—in Rome or in London?" "Oh! in Rome, Rome,"

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said he. "Then why should I go to London?" "To make a great fortune," said he. "But fame is my ambition, not a fortune. I think, Cavaliere, that no one can produce works for lasting fame out of Rome." Here the Baroness jumped up, with fire flashing from her bright black eyes. "I differ from you," she said. "Thorwaldsen modelled in his own country as fine things as he has done in Rome. Rome is a place to *learn* in." He interrupted her and said, "Ah! we are always learning." . . . The small model of the Aurora stood by, and he looked at it long, considering it. And I, with the feeling and submission of a scholar to a great and venerable master, said, "I pray you to examine it for me, and as usual say at once if it be worthy or not to be done in large." His sentiments were most encouraging. "By all means do it full size," said he.'

The lady's course did not run smooth. A few months later (May 7, 1842) Gibson thus reports. 'Thorwaldsen has rebelled against his Baroness—thrown away the carpets—you never saw such disorder. Some ladies whom I presented to him yesterday were amazed at his dirty appearance. He has declared that nothing shall induce him to go back with her to Copenhagen. This conduct

altogether threw her ill. She would see no one for days. Now she has taken him in hand again, and goes about with him as before.' After this Thorwaldsen's doom was sealed. A lady of such resolution (and such a name) was not easily baffled. She carried him off in the October of 1842, and very probably did the best for him in the end. He always believed he should return to Rome, but paralysis seized him, and he died in Copenhagen in 1844, at seventy-three years of age.

To return to Gibson's memoir of himself. 'I also had the advantage of the friendship of the late Baron Camuccini—then the first historical painter in Italy. I always said he would have made a greater sculptor than painter. Many of his best works have great power of composition and fine drawing. He had the most correct judgment and pure taste of any foreign painter I have known. Sculptors in general do not allow that painters are good judges in their art. At a very early period Camuccini began to teach me that unity of parts which is necessary throughout the figure, and this to me was not so easy a matter; but in the course of time I felt a more acute perception of that quality which is so perfect in the works of the Greeks. . . .

I have spoken of my statue of the Sleeping Shepherd purchased by Lord George Cavendish. He showed it to Lord Yarborough, and wrote to inform me that his lordship desired to have a graceful female statue by my hand. At that time I was modelling the figure of a nymph, seated ; while arranging her sandal her attention is drawn off, which gives a momentary suspense to her occupation. Her form is slender and very youthful. I enclosed a slight outline in a letter, and the result was that Lord Yarborough ordered it to be executed. Owing to my various occupations I had the nymph for six years in hand. It was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1830.

‘In the same year Mrs. Dudley North, sister to Lord Yarborough, came to Rome. She desired to raise a statue to the memory of her husband, the late Dudley North. After seeing my works she gave me the order to execute the statue. She had brought with her a cast from a bust of him by Nollekens, so I had no difficulty about the likeness. I modelled the figure seated in a chair. This was my first portrait statue. It was lost at sea, but having been insured Mrs. Dudley North commissioned me to reproduce it. In that year also I modelled a figure of Flora for Lord Durham.

‘Taking up the “Aminta” of Tasso, my imagination was caught by this passage in the Prologue :

‘Chi crederia che sotto umane forme
E sotto queste pastorali spoglie
Fosse nascosto un Dio ! non mica un Dio
Selvaggio, o della plebe degli Dei,
Ma tra grandi Celesti il più possente,
Che fa spesso cader di mano a Marte
La sanguinosa spada, ed a Nettuno,
Scotitor della terra, il gran tridente,
E le folgori eterne al sommo Giove.
In quest’ aspetto, certo, e in questi panni,
Non riconoscerà sì di leggiero
Venere madre me, suo figlio Amore.’

This gave me the idea of modelling Love disguised as a Shepherd, in his Greek hat and little cloak. The potent god, while slyly concealing behind his back the arrow of soft tribulations, advances his right hand as if to inspire confidence, and assumes an air of modesty and timidity. Below the edge of his mantle behind are just seen the tips of his folded wings.’

This statue of Cupid disguised as a Shepherd was executed for Sir John Johnstone and exhibited at the Royal Academy. The little God made, however, ‘no impression upon the hearts of the daily-paper critics.’ Nevertheless, he became a favourite, and was repeated in marble seven

times. One *replica* went to Russia, others to America.

‘There appeared in Rome a boy of twelve years old of most extraordinary beauty of face and figure, and whilst painters and sculptors were contending for him I also availed myself of so remarkable a model. I considered the idea of a statue of Cupid—this time nude. I represented him caressing a butterfly upon his breast, while with his right hand he is drawing forth an arrow to pierce it. I called it “Love tormenting the Soul.” I spent three months upon the clay model, working almost constantly. I afterwards executed it in marble for Lord Selsey, and repeated it subsequently for Mr. Yates of Liverpool, and for Mr. Holford. I look upon this statue as one of my best works.’ Gibson was fully persuaded that the little God appeared bodily to him on this occasion, and has left a description of the interview, which draws too much upon the marvellous for insertion here. The gist of their conversation, however, was that the God of Love directed the sculptor to colour his statue.

‘My next was a figure of Proserpine stooping to gather flowers in the fields of Enna. She kneels on one knee, and while plucking a violet

looks round in surprise and alarm at the approach of Pluto. She is about to spring up from her knees and fly. During the modelling of this statue I was much annoyed by a young Englishman who ran away with my beautiful model, and carried her off to England. This statue I executed in marble for Mr. Ablett of Llanbedr Hall in North Wales, and finally repeated it for Dwarkamuth Tagore in Calcutta, where, according to his account, it excited great attention.'

These examples help to show how constantly Gibson lived in the antique world. Only in that atmosphere did he seem to breathe freely and happily. A letter addressed to his friend Sir Charles Eastlake, after visiting Pompeii for the first time, is quite in place here. (Rome, July 1, 1831.) 'I need not tell you my very excited feelings on walking for the first time along the streets of Pompeii. How many lovely girls, I thought to myself, have pressed with their gold-sandalled feet these very stones we tread on! Who can enter these beautifully painted rooms and not see the lady of the house seated in the midst of her family—her beautiful daughters around her—one playing on the lyre, her gold-snaked wrist gracefully moving to the sound, others arranging their

gold fillets and peplum tipped with golden drops —another waving her leaf-formed fan/ I never sat so familiarly in company with the ancients before.'

Although the classic subjects and character of Gibson's works were then, as since, much attacked by the London periodical press, yet the Royal Academy was not slow in rendering him justice. In 1833 he was elected Associate of this body, and three years later full member. These distinctions Gibson was pleased to think had been in some measure promoted by his early friend and long fellow-resident in Rome, Sir Charles Eastlake, to whom he thus expresses his simple, upright feelings. (March 1836.) 'To be deeply indebted to you is to me happiness, not a burthen of which I could wish to rid myself. The return which I am sure would be most agreeable to you, and which I shall always endeavour to make, is to meet in every sense of the word the expectations of the Academy to which I have now the honour to belong in my own country.'

Gibson was now at the very zenith of his powers. With a growing fame, many friends, a loving brother, an absence of all domestic cares, a world of ancient art and of living beauty around him, and all

united in that Paradise of the artist—Rome—his life may be said to have been one of almost ideal felicity. But it became happier and fuller still. To return to his journal.

‘In the year 1838 came to Rome Mr. Henry Sandbach of Liverpool, and his lady. She was the granddaughter of William Roscoe, my early patron and best friend. Their stay during the whole winter gave them ample opportunities of enjoying Rome, its antiquities and arts, and me an opportunity of contemplating the talent and genius of this descendant of my patron. Besides being a poet, I soon perceived that Mrs. Sandbach had peculiar feeling and taste for my own art. Accordingly all my compositions on paper as well as those in clay I used to lay before her. One of these models became the favourite both with Mr. Sandbach and his lady. It was that of a hunter and his dog. The idea was taken from an incident in the street. My eye had been caught by a big boy holding a dog by the collar at the moment the animal was about to fly at an object. In this I saw a composition which impressed me. I carried it off in my memory, and made a small model in clay. It was ordered by Mr. Sandbach to be executed the size of life. This statue I

studied with great care, being anxious to make it my best work.* It is now in Mr. Sandbach's house on his estate in North Wales.'

This illustrates that habit of the observation of action and posture which Gibson early formed, and which found delightful and incessant exercise in his Roman life. 'Besides the study of the human form the true and diligent artist must carefully watch the movements of nature. These are of the greatest importance. By such observation he becomes original, and acquires simple, graceful, and natural action. The streets of Rome are in this respect a real academy. The inhabitants of warm climates are more free in their movements than those of cold countries. It was among them, in all the circumstances of their life, from the most pathetic to the most trifling, that the sculptor of the Dying Gladiator, and of the boy taking the thorn out of his foot, found these statues. It was there Praxiteles saw his young faun leaning against the trunk of a tree, and the Cupid bending his bow. It was among them that the Discobolus of Myron, and the same beautiful figure by Naucides were seen in living motion—with many other actions

* There can be little doubt that this is Gibson's finest work in the round. It was in the Great Exhibition of 1851.

which live equally in antique sculpture and in the every-day life of a southern people. I had frequently noticed women and girls in the streets stopping suddenly and turning round, looking backward over their shoulder at their heel—at the same time drawing their dress a little up. This action is always very graceful. One day I made a sketch in clay of it, and was pleased with the effect. Day after day I puzzled my brain for a subject to suit my sketch—all in vain! All of a sudden the idea of a wounded Amazon struck me. Modifying the attitude I made my Amazon lifting up her tunic with her left hand, and stooping a little to look at a wound she has received on the outside of her thigh—her heel is raised whilst the toes still touch the ground, and with the fingers of the right hand she touches the wound. This statue, after more than common labour, was finished and sent to the Marquis of Westminster, who had ordered it.

‘It is in the streets of Rome also that the unrestrained passions of the multitude, so full of expression, so adapted to art, may be studied. By such scenes the inventive faculties of the artist are enriched. One day, on my way to my studio, I witnessed in the Via Laurina a scene full of expression. There were three figures—two of them

young men, seemingly filled with rage towards each other. The third was a young woman who clung to the man who appeared to belong to her. Her hand was upon his breast, which was panting for rage; whilst in this action her face was turned to the other with an expression of great excitement. All this time not a word was spoken, nor did I see a knife in their hands. No one was near except myself. The incident thus brought before me led me at once to treat a subject which had long been in my mind—namely the quarrel between Eteocles and Polynices, on which occasion their mother Jocasta interceded. I began this energetic and grand subject in basso-rilievo, and spent a long time over the model.

Polynices. There
Will I oppose thee front to front, there kill thee.
Eteocles. My soul's on fire to meet thee.
Jocasta. Wretched me!
What will ye do, my sons ?'

I have represented Polynices looking at his brother with calm dignity, and pointing with his sword, as if saying "There will I oppose thee," while Eteocles full of rage and impetuosity is checked by Jocasta, who stands between her sons, with one hand holding Polynices by the wrist, seeking to

reconcile him to his brother, and with the other upon the breast of Eteocles checking his fury.

‘Black choler filled his breast, that boiled with ire,
And from his eyeballs flashed the living fire.’

These lines I repeated often to myself while modelling the figure of Eteocles. Jocasta is richly attired with a diadem on her head, her veil falling back in graceful folds. Her whole character is queen-like, and in her tribulation dignified; her soul is harassed by the conduct of Eteocles. I must confess that I have some pride in this basso-rilievo. Years ago Marshal Marmont when at Rome did me the honour to come to my studio, when he pronounced this to be the most successful of my works. I have never had an order to execute it. Subjects of grandeur and heroic energy seldom attract the public.

‘Besides the Hunter Mr. Sandbach desired to have another figure by my hands to present to his lady, representing some object congenial to her own poetic feeling. This proposal began to occupy my thoughts deeply, and according to my habitual custom I used to go to the Villa Borghese and wander in the shade meditating and seeking for ideas. It was in these solitary musings that

Aurora dawned upon me. I repeated to myself those lines of Milton's :

‘ Now Morn, her rosy steps in the Eastern clime
Advancing, sowed the earth with orient pearl.’

The more I thought of it the more did I feel that this would be the very subject for my youthful friend.’ He writes to Mrs. Sandbach afterwards—from Innsbrück, ‘ I will give you a sketch of the statue, but only in words. It is not a bad thing for an artist to put down in words the spirit of his idea—though this is a part which you can do better than I.

‘ Behold the harbinger of day, Aurora, goddess of the morning, mother of the stars and of the winds, just risen from the ocean with the bright star Lucifer glittering over her brow—one foot on the waves, the other softly touching the earth. Aurora youthful, gay, fresh as the blooming rose, light as the dew, swift as the rising sun her brother. She is clad in the most transparent vest, simple and rich ; her delicate limbs are unrestrained and free among the numerous folds which collect themselves in playful variety here and there ; now waving, now fluttering, now winding about as she glides on, on, through the refreshing breeze.

‘ Aurora has filled the two vases which she

carries in her soft hands with pure dew from the sea, and as she moves onward with swift wings, at the same time casting a serene and dignified glance over the universe, she scatters the pearly drops over the earth, and all the flowers awake and expand in the morning sun. This subject for a statue is I believe new; I was encouraged to put it in execution from having seen the fictile vase published by Millingen, upon which is a single figure of Aurora hovering in the air, and holding two vases out of which she is pouring dew upon the earth. This is the Greek authority for the two vases in the hands of my figure. . . .

‘I will now mention Earl Fitzwilliam’s visit to Rome—he was accompanied by his daughters. He visited my studio, and after examining all my works he said that he desired to decorate his large hall at Wentworth with two bassi-rilievi, and that he had fixed upon the subjects. The moment he said that a damp fell upon my mind, for I knew if I did not approve his choice I should not be willing to accept the commission. His lordship then named a subject from the history of England, with knights on horseback in armour. I said I had great admiration for horses, and had studied the animal—its forms, anatomy

and action—but I objected to the knights. I tried to impress on his mind that the beauty of the human figure, with expression, was the charm of sculpture. I then showed him a drawing I had made of the Hours and the Horses of the Sun. Earl Fitzwilliam had the good taste to order this beautiful subject to be executed—with Phaeton driving the Chariot of the Sun as its companion.'

On some occasions Gibson would burst into a rhapsody of delight over his art.

'Sculpture is the delight of my soul : it is more elevating than any of the other departments of the arts, for its proper aim is the sublime, and the purest beauty. To arrive at this lofty degree is the great difficulty—there is but one road to it, and this was travelled by the Greeks. Nature was their school—Nature in all her emotions, and in all her movements. They established the standard of beauty from her. Every part of their statues is copied from the life, yet some say that their works are conventional. What a lesson it is to us to contemplate these immortal productions. They are the golden rules by which we should be guided.

'All those men of genius in modern times who

have deviated from the principles of Greek art have left us works not superior but greatly inferior to the ancients. We ought to profit by their errors. It is the desire of novelty that destroys pure taste. What is novel diverts us—truth and beauty instruct us. Socrates asserts that evils have a necessary existence, for it is necessary that there should be something contrary to good.

‘When we glance over the productions of all those artists who have tried new styles—deviating from the true principles of Greek art—when we see Michael Angelo and his followers, Bernini and his school—we all acknowledge mighty genius in the first and great cleverness in the second, but the simplicity of nature and the refined beauty of form, the easy grace, and the sedate grandeur which exist in Greek art are altogether wanting in these masters.’

In a conversation with the late Mr. Harford of Blaise Castle, from whose journal we are allowed to quote, Gibson thus expressed himself in admiration of Michael Angelo’s *Pietà* in St. Peter’s—especially as being the work of the great master’s twenty-fifth year. ‘It is placed,’ he said, ‘so high in the church that it is impossible to see it, but I have studied it in casts, and the body of the Christ

—the arms and the limbs—are executed with the greatest beauty and truth. . . . But in point of taste his style appears to have been hurt by his profound admiration and study of the Belvedere Torso, which, though an exceedingly fine thing in itself for its special object, is not to be praised as a general type of the human form. One sees, however, in his works its influence upon them. One sees it for instance in the allegorical figures in the sacristy of S. Lorenzo at Florence. These are certainly in the style of the Torso. We can but admire the figure of the Notte—as a work of art it is admirable, but no one could sleep in such a position, and that of the limbs is unnatural. The execution of these statues is extremely fine. The celebrated statue of Lorenzo de' Medici is full of sentiment, and seems almost alive. But grand as these works are, and much as I admire the genius of the man, I cannot say that he had, like Raphael, just ideas of beauty and grace, and I have often thought that if Phidias and his chief followers could have been introduced to the sight of these works they would have exclaimed, “Here is indeed a most clever and wonderful sculptor, but a barbarian!” Muscular energy pervades all his works too forcibly—whereas in the works of the Greeks

(so attentive are they to the truth of Nature) there is a difference in the muscular expression appertaining to youth, manhood, and to old age, each of which has its appointed surface and treatment.' In writing to his friend Miss Lloyd, April 1832, he again says: 'Your time has been well spent at Florence among the statues, but though I admire the genius and power of Michael Angelo very much, I am afraid your taste might be led astray by him. . . . The works of the Greeks are like the works of the gods. Michael Angelo was a wonderful mortal—but celestial beauty and grace he never arrived at.'

'Those sculptors who are not of the classical schools, having no fixed principles, have no difficulties to contend with. They maintain that rules cramp their genius. They thus enjoy liberty, but they cannot elevate our feelings.

'When I was modelling the Hunter and Dog I had a very fine model in the prime of his youth—with correct proportions. But besides having this young man I went often to study the casts from the Elgin marbles at the Academy of St. Luke. These sculptures from the Parthenon are the most valuable and interesting in existence. Here we behold works which Phidias himself directed.

The probability is that he designed all the statues and the bassi-rilievi, and probably modelled the finest of them with his own hands. . . . Yes, the school of Phidias is before our eyes; if we cannot equal these noble examples, we can at least penetrate into their transcendent excellence. There is, after all the destruction of Greek art, enough in Europe to enable the moderns to form a grand and pure style of sculpture. Yet there are great and fatal obstacles in our way, for nude statues are not wanted to adorn our public buildings, nor are they admitted into our temples. The public statues which are erected in our squares, and in the interior of our mansions, do not require the study of the Phidian school to produce them. The human figure concealed under a frock-coat and trowsers is not a fit subject for sculpture. I would rather avoid contemplating such objects.

‘When the Government did me the honour to entrust to me the execution of the statue of the late Sir Robert Peel I was allowed my own way as to the dress. Had they bound me to the anti-sculptural costume I was prepared to decline the work. One of the most classical architects in London stated in a note which I received from him that he could not agree with my idea of

“masquerading John Bull as an ancient Greek.” My reply was that I would not dress him up exactly like an ancient Greek; but that he, the architect, would sadly transgress the rules of good taste and harmony by placing statues in coats and trowsers between his Corinthian and Ionic columns; and I added that, to be consistent, he should invent a new order of architectural forms in unison with our modern costume. Such statues are as obnoxious to me in a Gothic as in a classical building. The matter of fact principles advocated by many, indeed by all who do not feel high art, always produce vulgarity. The literal imitation of matter delights the masses. They are never aware that the image of a great man should always impress the spectator with the character of his intellectual greatness—it should give us an idea of his soul, and this may be done by judgment and taste without taking too much from the individuality. . . . There are scribblers about art who endeavour to denounce the introduction into monuments of figures personifying the moral virtues of the deceased; thus they would reduce monumental sculpture to simply the statue of the person, and that must be in a frock-coat and cravat.

‘ But a writer somewhere says, “ The practice of personifying natural and moral qualities seems to have been coeval with Grecian poetry and religion : it was not, however, by any means peculiar to Greece, and will probably be found wherever poetry exists.”

CHAPTER V.

*Grazia—Birth of Venus—Earthly and Heavenly Love—
At Yverdun—Illustrations of Psyche—Anecdote of Turner—
Thunderstorm in the Alps.*

I BELIEVE Winckelmann says that now and then there springs up at Rome a face equal to the antique. We have had such an instance in a girl named "Grazia," of Capua. Artists of all nations pronounced her the greatest beauty they had ever seen—she became a model, but only for the head. It was remarkable to see a living being so identical in feature with the Greek ideal. The tragic grandeur of her countenance was most impressive—every part of the face was Greek—her eyes were large and black—her eyebrows black and strong, and drooping a little where they met, which gave a sternness. Her mouth with the very short upper lip was perfect—the hair grew low upon the forehead, and was in such profusion as to be envied by all the female kind. Grazia treated all the artists with great haughtiness. She

had a deficient temper, and it was always difficult to induce her to keep the position required. If a sharp word was said to her she would immediately march off, and leave the poor artist to his own reflections. My friend Mr. B., a well-known portrait painter, was painting her one day. She was sitting abominably, and he said an impatient word. Grazia answered nothing, but rose from her seat, took her shawl over her arm, scanned him grandly from head to foot in silence, and lifting herself to her full height—she was tall—stalked majestically away. He, poor man, was in despair, thinking she would never sit again. However next morning he thought of an expedient, and turning into a jeweller's shop in the Corso he purchased a beautiful gold ornament. Then he called upon the tyrant, humbly begged her pardon, and tendered the offering, which was condescendingly accepted, and all was made up.

‘During summer there may be seen in the streets of Rome groups of young women and girls dancing and playing on the tambourine. Grazia one evening gave such a ball, herself leading the dance and playing spiritedly on her tambourine. This was before her own dwelling, opposite to which was a large convent with high

windows. The next day she received an injunction from the Superior not to dance there any more. After some time had elapsed Grazia felt inclined to renew her gaieties, and heedlessly invited her friends to the same place. That same night, about two in the morning (the general hour for arresting people), when in deep slumber, she was awakened by thundering knocks at the door. On opening it she was accosted by the *gens-d'armes*, who ordered her to dress, put her into a coach, and took her at once to prison, where she was kept for several days. Grazia told me this occurrence herself.

‘I had often meditated a bust of her, but had hesitated on account of her insolent and capricious ways. One day Lord Kilmorey encouraged me to begin by expressing a desire for her bust in marble. I then engaged the girl to sit to me. She was, as usual, full of engagements: I wrote my name at the bottom of the long list, and had then to wait three weeks for my turn. At that time, fortunately for me, I had two young lady friends modelling in the same room where Grazia sat. One was Miss Somerville, youngest daughter of the celebrated Mrs. Somerville. She spoke Italian beautifully and kept Grazia in the best

possible humour. Grazia was under the delusion that every "Signora Inglese" could speak her language, and it was dangerous for any lady to come and look at her and not speak. Whilst Grazia was sitting to the same painter who gave her the gold ornament a distinguished English lady came and looked at her. Her ladyship understood Italian, but did not say a word to the girl. This made her furious, and as the lady was quitting the room and yet within full hearing, she exclaimed at the top of her voice "Che brutta vecchia!" The painter was overwhelmed with confusion.

'I took great pains with the bust, and felt happy to model such an extraordinary beauty. One day a lady came in who did not understand Italian. She stared at the girl very steadfastly in silence. Turning to me the lady said, with a sense of disappointment, "Is *this* the beauty?" I had already observed a cloud gathering over Grazia's black brows, and her eyes began to kindle. "And what an atrocious expression she has," the visitor added. Grazia darted her fiery looks at me and said in a sarcastic tone "Cosa dice la Signora?" Instantly I said "Dice che siete molto bella." She was immediately mollified, and a tinge of red came into

her cheeks, which gave a charm to her dark complexion. Thus by a great deviation from truth I saved the lady from some gross and insulting expression, but my mother would have grieved over this infringement on my part.

‘ Another day Lady Davy came in to pay a visit to our savage beauty. I had warned her as to the necessary deportment towards Grazia. So the moment her ladyship entered the room she began to compliment her, saying “ Bellissima, davvero ;” and after a few more pretty speeches took her leave. Grazia then with a sigh said to herself, “ Che cara Signora ! spero che tornerà.”

‘ I finished the bust for Lord Kilmorey, and afterwards executed a replica for Her Majesty. On the front is inscribed

Grazia.

Filia Capuensis.

‘ Mrs. Huskisson was also a great admirer of the Beauty. When she was in Rome there was a German who gave *tableaux vivants* at the “ Teatro Valle ;” the most beautiful of the models were selected. Grazia was seen to great advantage costumed as Raphael’s Muse of Poetry, with a lyre in her hand and crowned with laurel. The applause was tremendous, and the “ ancoras ” re-

peated again and again. Mrs. Huskisson said it was the most beautiful sight she ever saw. When Grazia was about twenty-five, she married a baker, and had a baby, after whose birth she never recovered her strength. The doctors recommended her native air, and she returned to Capua and soon died.

‘Vittoria of Albano was another beauty, and very Grecian too. She would not sit to sculptors, but consented to be painted by Vernet. So her beauty will not be preserved to future ages by the more lasting material of the sculptor.

‘A third fair one may also be mentioned—her name was Assunta. She was painted by many, and by Riedel for the Queen.’

While Gibson’s passion for beauty found its highest exercise in following the rules and tracing the means which had attained development in the almost superhuman perfection of Greek art, it was natural that he should also take delight in dwelling on the nobler and deeper meanings of those fables which that art illustrated—on the *religion* that underlies the Greek mythology. The medley of fancy and philosophy, all pervaded by the aspirations of a mind of peculiar purity and simplicity, to which these Gibsonian glossaries of antique

lore gave rise, may appear foolishness to some, but can least of all be excluded from a work professing to give a faithful portrait of the man as he lived and thought. Some also will not fail to see how closely he trenched upon the deep things of a better philosophy. It is very interesting to observe in his correspondence with Mrs. Sandbach how these two minds, differently gifted, but both touched with celestial fire, acted upon each other—hers ever pointing to the sublime certainties of Revelation, his dreaming and wandering through dimmer ways. He thus writes to Mrs. Sandbach (Christmas Day 1840): ‘I am contending with the desire to begin to model my design of the birth of Venus: soon I shall abandon everything and begin. Let me bring it before your mental sight. Behold the new-born Goddess of Beauty risen from the sea, one foot on the earth, the other just emerging from the last wave. She looks forward with modesty and innocence while celestial Eros receives her with joyful delight. On the left side of Venus is the Goddess of Persuasion, holding her hand, and crowning her with flowers. Phidias represented Venus risen from the sea and received by Love, while Persuasion presents to her a crown of flowers. That is my authority for

introducing Persuasion. Besides beauty a woman must have the power of eloquence—talent—or we get tired of her. . . . You say of Amor “But how could it be? for Venus was his mother, and when she rose from the sea he was not born, was he?” “Yes, he was.” You say “I can’t understand how you make it out.” Then observe and be good. Hesiod in his *Theogonia* says that Amor rose up to light out of that unformed mass called Chaos, before all else; before the supreme gods had occupied their seats. From Chaos sprung up the most beautiful of all the supreme gods, the sweet god Cupid; the consolation both of gods and men—he who softens the heart, and tames the savage beasts—Cupid sprang up out of dark Chaos, borne up on high with splendid golden wings, and after him the gliding Hours.

‘I think he is called the oldest of the gods. Remember this is Celestial Love, and means, methinks, something of this nature. God, who ever existed, called matter together into form. He created the heavens, and all the gods or ministers. But there was with the Divine Power a *pre-existing Desire* to call forth the Creation—therefore Desire, or Divine Love, is first-born, and keeps together in harmony all things above and

below. The ancients made an image of that pre-existing Desire with golden wings, and called it Eros—and at the birth of Beauty he was present, and received her in his arms, while Eloquence bestows upon the new goddess the powers of persuasion, thus giving you double arms with which to overcome and humble us poor men. Without Divine Love matter would dissolve—He binds all and everything together.’

The distinction between Earthly and Heavenly Love was a favourite subject with Gibson, who entered as ardently into the question as if it had concerned the politics of the day. These ruminations gave birth to one of his most beautiful designs in bas-relief. He says to Mrs. Sandbach in 1841, ‘I have pleased myself with the idea of making the celestial Eros extricating the soul from the persecution of the earthly Eros—but the composition was not quite to my liking. I will model it on a much larger scale and send it to the Exhibition. One of the set who are against treating classical subjects said to me, when looking at this design, “You will have to write a page of explanation that people may understand what it means.” I said “Oh no, not a page—only Tom and Jerry fighting for a butterfly.”’ Further on,

when acknowledging Mrs. Sandbach's lines on this idea, given below,* he adds 'I had been thinking that the name of the victor is not Eros, but Anteros—and I got Mr. Benjamin to look into the learned commentator Alciati, and find that Anteros is the Celestial Love, first-born of

* CELESTIAL TO EARTHLY LOVE.

To the realms of celestial light,
On the wings of the heaven-born breeze,
I bear the soul from your power away,
Free from the yoke of your tyrant sway.

Hold! from thy touch it is safe,
In an atmosphere purer than thine,
Earth-bound thou canst not pursue it above,
Where it flies with its guardian, Celestial Love!

Knowest thou not Eros, First-born
Of the royal assemblage on high?
Eros, who rose from the shadowy gloom
In light and in splendour, in beauty and bloom?

O'er the earth on my glittering wings
I hung, and she blushed into day,—
I awakened the voice of the spheres, and the song
Of gladness and triumph rolled richly along.

The Hours on my radiant path
Fling buds of undying bloom,
The golden arrows that fly from my bow
Bear tokens of friendship to mortals below.

I've mourned o'er the beautiful Soul
Consigned to thy withering flame;
'Tis rescued, and now I defy thee to pour
O'er the purified spirit one influence more.

the gods—Anteros—anterior to Earthly Love and opposed to him. Alciati is good authority, but Cicéro and some others call Celestial Love the son of Venus and Mars—they are wrong altogether. . . .

‘Plato in his Symposium says that there are two Venuses and two Cupids; one divine and the other vulgar and plebeian.

‘Now Anteros is interpreted by Proclus as Divine Love, who abstracts the soul from the body.

‘Plutarch in Erotiko says there were two Loves, according to the sentiments of the Egyptians and the Platonists—the common and the celestial.

‘Alciati makes Anteros say, “I am not born of the vulgar or common Venus (Pandemon). I have nothing to do with vulgar voluptuousness. The vulgar Venus is concerned about base amours, but I inflame the breast to virtue and to honesty, and raise the mind to the contemplation of heavenly things.”’

Even in the fable of Narcissus Gibson repudiated the common story, and dwelt upon the deeper sentiment related by Pausanias, viz.: that Narcissus had a twin sister very like himself,

and who was habited in the same garments adapted to the chase, to which she accompanied him. This sister died, and accidentally seeing himself in the fountain he took his own image for that of his dead sister and pined away in love and grief.* This statue by Gibson is one of peculiar grace. The first idea of it was suggested by a boy sitting on the edge of a fountain under the wall of the French Academy, with one leg doubled under him and looking into the water. It was executed for Lord Barrington.

Gibson's thoughts on celestial Love extended by a natural connection to the history of Psyche, which he illustrated by some of his most exquisite productions. It was while wandering in the woods of Yverdun, to which place he and his brother had retreated from the heat of Rome—and thinking alternately of Mrs. Sandbach and of Psyche, both equally real and inspiring to him—that he first began to consider how this fable might be treated. 'Yverdun, July 31, 1843.—I must now tell you how I make use of my time here. First my brother and I walk for nearly two hours and a half. It being very cool we can take exercise

* *Descrizione della Grecia di Pausania*, tradotta da A. Nibby, vol. iii. p. 278.

every day. Then Ben goes to his Greek, and I to my designs from the story of Psyche. For some years past I have felt a desire to illustrate this beautiful story, and began that design of the Marriage which you have. This fable has been illustrated by Raphael and other great men, but still I feel that I could also do something and keep clear of them. To engrave these in simple outline was my object, but that is rather costly, and the purchasers would be few—few have taste for classical and chaste designs. I have just made a sketch of Psyche when she arrives at the palace of Proserpine with the casket of Venus to obtain the essence of beauty. She was instructed how to conduct herself in the presence of the goddess. “You will be graciously received and invited to sit upon a superb seat, and to partake of delicious viands—but you are to sit upon the ground and ask only for black bread.” This shows ancient manners. Psyche here is a suppliant. I have represented her seated on the ground in great modesty and melancholy, with the little casket in one hand and an olive branch in the other, and Proserpine is seated leaning forward and bidding her rise.’

Again from the same place. ‘August 23, 1843.

The pen with which 'I now write to you has just drawn another design from the story of Psyche. In despair for the loss of Cupid she precipitates herself into the river. But the kind river washes her on to the shore—upon a flowery bank. Old Pan sees her, and consoles her with fatherly sympathy. I have represented the old God raising Psyche upon his brawny arms—she very languid and overpowered with despair. The face and figure of Pan makes a good contrast with the delicate and lovely girl. What I admire so much in this story is that it presents so many varied pictures. I think I shall be pretty well acquainted with Psyche and all her troubles. Psyche and yourself have so often been my companions in the woods of Yverdun. I am never, never alone, and my thoughts never still.'

Gibson reasoned rightly as to the difference between sculpture and painting in the limits assigned to each, but he had very little knowledge of any art but his own. In painting he rather liked the wrong thing best—viz. a sculpturesque effect and subject. As to Turner's pictures they were as much caviar to him as to the multitude. An anecdote related to Mrs. Sandbach is truly Gibsonian.

‘I got into a fine scrape at Turner’s one day. I knew Turner well, I liked him much, and he was always kind to me—called me “Gibby.” I went to his house with Mrs. Huskisson. We were shown into a room where a large picture by him stood, apparently unfinished. When he joined us—I standing before the picture looking at it—I said, “This is a very fine beginning, Mr. Turner.” “Beginning!” he cried; “why, Sir, this picture is complete, and will be sent off to-morrow.” I saw Mrs. Huskisson fidgeting her fingers about, as she does when she is uncomfortable. Turner then turned to the chimney-piece where stood two little terra-cotta figures—horrid things they were! “Come here, Gibson,” said he, “these are more in your line.” When we got into the carriage again Mrs. Huskisson said, “Well, I think you got yourself into a pretty scrape there.”’

Nor did Gibson care for the beauties of scenery in the modern sense of the term—chiefly perhaps because he was too unsophisticated to say or do anything because other people did it. He was ever a child—absorbed, inattentive—dwelling within. ‘Heaven lay around him,’ even at man’s estate—never to the last fading ‘into the light of common day.’ He had too the vanity of a child,

guileless and transparent—fondly repeating what he had once said well—a mind peculiarly refreshing to the weary and heavy laden, and quite unconsciously so. But he was stirred by the grander effects of Nature, and delighted also in the simple manners of her more lowly inhabitants. After many hot summers in Rome refreshed only by short retreats to L'Arícia, or any neighbouring places, he found it necessary to seek a greater change of temperature, and spent several summers at Innsbrück accompanied by his brother, and once by his friend Mr. Penry Williams. On crossing the S. Bernardino they encountered a thunderstorm, his description of which might have been borrowed from 'Childe Harold' but that he probably had never read a word of it. 'July 31, 1841. We proceeded from Bellinzona, always surrounded by mountains as we ascended higher and higher, and slept at S. Bernardino. It is to this place, surrounded by perpetual snows, that people come to drink the mineral waters. This would be an admirably cool place to stay at for some time. In the morning we—no ; first let me tell you we had a storm in the night. "How she would have liked it," I thought to myself, "but she is asleep." The storm was below us, and as

we heard the elements raging beneath we became aware of our very elevated position. How sublime is thunder among the mountains ! The roaring of one mighty mountain to another, and that rebellowing back again. The sudden crashes, like artillery, cracking and rattling, stunning the ear, while the lightning rent the troubled air of the night. We listened with awe to the storm, as the long hollow rumbling murmured more and more faintly away into the distant deeps. The storm had subsided, and the morning was fine, and the delicate blue ethereal sky seen through the rents in the rolling clouds was cheering. We travelled along in deep snow, sometimes completely enveloped in thick clouds, so that we saw nothing but what was close to us, and then emerging into the light of heaven in a new world at top. I thought of you, and longed for you to enjoy with me, to behold, to share in what I admired. The eternal-looking mountains all around, glittering majestically in the morning sun. I felt my soul buoyant and irresistibly rising up with joy at so magnificent a sight.

· ‘After travelling eight days we arrived here (Innsbrück) and find the air delightfully cool. I cannot tell you how well I am, and so is Mr. Ben.

Every morning we take our walks in the woods here. I feel as if I were new modelled. But there is a spirit within me will not let me alone. I count the days, I think of my studio. And then I am puzzled as to a subject of a single statue for you—here in the woods I ponder and ponder. I see the little bee finds a flower here and there, sucks its sweets, and is rewarded, but I have not found anything to reward me. How difficult it is to find what is not yet born!

‘Yesterday morning during our walks in the hills, in the woods, I was struck by a sweet voice. It was a girl watching her flock. The air was plaintive, and had a peculiar effect—so pleasing—and as I walked along ruminating I thought how would a statue of a shepherdess do! An Arcadian shepherdess, very beautiful, sitting down, and resting her hand upon her crook, and in the other hand a pipe. She looks melancholy, and in her drooping look there is a weariness of mind and body which gives the whole figure a graceful relaxation—and by her you see those little flowers called forget-me-not! Would it be difficult to imagine that this nymph is unhappy in her love?’ This idea afterwards ripened into a small clay model of the Shepherdess Enone, deserted by

Paris, and contended with the *Aurora* for preference among the more sentimental of the visitors to the studio.

The next summer Gibson was in Innsbrück again. He writes July 2, 1842: 'Here we are among the mountains of the Tyrol once more—Williams, Mr. Ben, and your restless-minded friend. You make me restless, for I accuse myself every day for being so long without writing to you. But do not think that I am forgetting you; during our journey whenever we came to anything beautiful or grand, unknown to others I divided the pleasure with invisible you. . . . From Bormio the famous road begins which passes over the Stelvio into the Tyrol: the highest carriage-road in the world. We began the ascent early in the morning. It is magnificent and wonderful. Man shows his talents, his power over great difficulties, in the construction of these roads. Behold the cunning little workman—he comes, he explores, and says "Yes! I will send a carriage and horses over these mighty mountains," and, by Jove, you are drawn up among the eternal snows. I am a great admirer of these roads. . . .

'I often think of your present labours, your

tragedy, and long to read it. I like the subject much. In poetry the principal characters require elevation and beauty, and most decidedly so in works of art. How Homer painted his heroes!

‘Great as the gods the exalted chief was seen,
His strength like Neptune, and like Mars his mien;
Jove o’er his eyes celestial glories spread,
And dawning conquest played around his head.’

Sculpture should always be in this spirit. Sir Robert Peel said to me, speaking of my statue, “It is very like Huskisson, but you have given a grandeur of look to the figure which did not belong to him.” I fancy 150 years hence people will not complain of that.

‘Again at Innsbrück—July 1845. Mr. Ben and I get up every morning at half-past four and take long walks, and then we have our breakfast at a café house. And the girl who serves us is always anxious to say something to us, but it is all useless. We do not understand one word, but she understands me when I say “Café and milk for swine” (*für zweien*). Nor do I understand all the kinds of money, so I let the pretty girl take what she likes out of my hand, and I am sure she does not take more than is just from the swine.’

CHAPTER VI.

Statues of Mr. Huskisson—Mrs. Huskisson—Bronze Casting at Munich—Principles of Portrait Sculpture—Public Dinners at Liverpool and Glasgow—Commission from the Queen—Visit to Windsor—Queen's Statue—Colour—Richard Wyatt—Bombardment of Rome.

THE allusions to the statue of Mr. Huskisson must now be explained. Gibson's biography will furnish the details.

'After the melancholy death of Mr. Huskisson it was decided to erect at Liverpool a statue to his memory, and artists were invited, and I among them, to send in models for that purpose. But being impressed with the bad results of competition on these occasions, and the difficulty which those totally unconnected with art have in selecting the best designs, I declined competing. The work was ultimately given to me on my own terms (namely, to be treated classically). In 1831 I commenced the clay model, which I completed in five months. I represented Huskisson standing—draped in the Pharos, with the right arm and shoulder uncovered. He holds a scroll which he

is unrolling, at the same time looking at you with firmness. It made an impression on those who saw it, and Mrs. Huskisson hearing of the success of the work undertook a journey to Rome, on purpose to see it. Meanwhile I had received a letter from the committee saying that they had been informed that I was modelling the statue of Huskisson with a bare arm and shoulder and ordering me to cover them. I showed the letter to Mrs. Huskisson and she begged me to make no alteration. Soon after, she told me that she had spoken to the Marquis of Anglesea, then in Rome, who had in some way communicated with the committee, and a second letter gave me leave to keep the statue as it was. It was completed in marble and placed in the new Cemetery at Liverpool, within a circular temple designed by Mr. Foster over the spot where the remains of Mr. Huskisson repose.

‘ It was in consequence of the following circumstance that the second statue of Mr. Huskisson was designed. A Liverpool gentleman proposed that the statue should be removed from the Cemetery and placed in the Custom House—that being a site connected with the services Mr. Huskisson had rendered to the commerce of Liverpool.

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The idea of the removal was found to be very adverse to the feelings of Mrs. Huskisson, and she requested to be allowed to present another statue of her husband to be placed in the Custom House. This offer was accepted by the Mayor and Town Council, and I was employed to model a statue eight feet high. This figure was represented in a moment of deep thought, with the left hand raised before the chest, a slight action in the fingers as if calculating, and the right hand hanging down holding a book. This again is bare-necked and draped with a mantle in large and magnificent folds—a mode of attiring the statues of our great men not entirely in accordance with the ideas of our committees.

‘ During the modelling of this statue Mrs. Huskisson returned to Rome, witnessed the progress of it, and suggested many improvements in the face, which rendered this the more like of the two. She herself considered this statue the superior one. These circumstances brought me to the notice and into the society of Mrs. Huskisson, in whom I found a most gifted and sensible lady, and a warm and generous friend. She sympathised earnestly in my fame and was the principal cause of my rousing myself from my

twenty-seven years' residence in Rome, and of my coming to England in the summer of 1844 to place the statue. I proceeded to Liverpool for this purpose, but found on examination that the position destined for it in the long room of the Custom House was altogether unsuitable, while the only place in the building where there was a proper light could not be obtained. Mrs. Huskisson therefore being anxious that the statue should be seen to the best advantage suggested that a site should be assigned in the open area surrounding the building, and proposed to withdraw the marble statue, and substitute one for it in bronze. After some difficulty this generous offer was also accepted.*

It is with mournful pleasure that I here pause for a moment to pay a tribute to this lamented lady. After the dreadful blow to her health as well as her happiness inflicted by Mr. Huskisson's tragical end she remained for long in entire retirement, which may be said to have been first broken by her journey to Rome to inspect the model of Mr. Huskisson's statue in the winter of 1833. Till then Gibson had been personally un-

* This second marble statue is placed at Lloyd's, Royal Exchange.

known to her. To those who have had the privilege of knowing both it is no matter of surprise that this noble-hearted lady should soon feel an interest in the sculptor, second only to that she felt for his work. No one was ever more prompt to recognise what was noble and true in another, and in this unsophisticated man and in his art she found a new and unexpected field of interest, the more acceptable as it lay not only out of the world, but out of the line of all former associations—excepting always that which lies at the root of all interest in the bereaved heart; namely, the association with the object of its sorrow. Gibson's unworldly simplicity refreshed her spirit, his blunders and mistakes revived her vivacity. Her affection for him was of a nature given to few to bestow or to receive—equally as judicious as enthusiastic in his behalf. She opened both her town and country houses to receive him, gave him the benefit of her perfect knowledge of the world, promoted his interests with unflagging kindness and energy, and looked for no return but the pleasure she derived from these self-imposed duties. His very friends shared in the sunshine of Mrs. Huskisson's friendship, as those few who still survive will gratefully acknowledge, to whom the simple words 'dear

Gibson'—her usual designation for him—will ever conjure up memories sad and sweet.

Mrs. Huskisson passed also the winter of 1845-6 at Rome. She quitted the Eternal City in May, accompanied by Gibson as far as Munich—she on her way to England, he to his usual summer resort, Innsbrück. At Munich they inspected the bronze cast of the statue of Mr. Huskisson which had been executed there, and which was the object of their visit. They also witnessed the casting of another statue, of which operation he has left an original description in a letter to his old friend Mrs. Lawrence (née d'Aguilar) near Liverpool. 'We stayed seven days at Munich—Mrs. Huskisson living at the house of her cousin the English minister; his lady is young and beautiful. He drove us all to the Royal Foundry to see finished what Mrs. Huskisson has so much at heart. The Foundry is a little out of town. On our approach we beheld our statue upon a wooden pedestal erected in the open air, glittering in the morning sun. Mrs. Huskisson was taken by surprise to see it standing out before the building, with beautiful green trees behind it forming a good background. As we entered the enclosed ground we were received by Mr. Müller, the bronze-caster. He was

dressed on purpose to receive us, with an order on his breast. He is a simple modest young fellow. I complimented him upon the beautiful cast, and so did Mrs. Huskisson with grace and much delight. Mr. Müller was soon charmed with our little lady—when pleased tossing her head about and full of joy. Her soul is ever young.

‘In about four days we returned to see the casting of a statue. This time Mr. Müller was as black as a tinker—I should have said as Vulcan—but thoughtful and anxious; for you must know, if the operation fails it is a great loss to the man. A platform was raised outside of the foundry for our ladies, that they might see through the windows, and in case of explosion they would have been out of danger. After a considerable time the order was given by Müller to cast; the workmen were numerous, and the place hot and full of smoke. I saw the brass plug of the great pan which contains the melted metal knocked inwards by several great blows given to it with a long iron pole, the end of which was red hot; in it went, and out rushed the living, red hot river of bronze. It made its way down into the mould of the figure very regularly for some minutes, when, at last, I heard a roaring, bubbling noise, and saw the fiery

liquid rushing out of the mouth of the mould through several holes, in broken lumps. I started at that moment, thinking an explosion was taking place, when instantly Müller threw his cap up in the air, and all the black devils around him did the same, with a tremendous shout, then a second shout, and then a third, uttering each time exclamations which I did not understand. The first was for the happy result of the casting, the second for the health of Mrs. Huskisson, the third for me. When the great door was thrown open I was so glad of a little air, and we were all covered with particles of soot. Then in rushed, through all the black devils, a fine well-made young Frau up to Müller, threw her arms round his neck and kissed him—her joy at the success of the cast.'

The statue was eventually placed in front of the Custom House at Liverpool in October 1847, at which ceremony Gibson was present.

The portrait statues by Gibson are very remarkable, chiefly from the look of monumental grandeur which Sir Robert Peel criticised in that of Mr. Huskisson. Our sculptor defined his ideas of what a portrait should be clearly and originally. 'The fault of the portraits of the present age is that every man is expected to look pleasant in his

picture. The old masters represented men thinking, and women tranquil—the Greeks the same. Therefore the past race of portraits in paint and in marble look more like a superior class of beings. How often have I heard the remark, “Oh! he looks too serious,”—but the expression that is meant to be permanent should be serious and calm.’ He subsequently executed a statue of Stephenson, on which occasion he remarked, ‘Mrs. Lawrence says that Stephenson should have a look of energy—a man of [“]action more than contemplation. I will endeavour to give him a look capable of action and energy, but he must be contemplative, grave, and simple. He is a good subject. I wish to make him look like an Archimedes. Activity and energy are momentary, contemplation is more suited to marble. The statue must give an idea of his studious moments.’ Again, when engaged in the pleasing task of modelling the fine features of the Duchess of Wellington, a gentleman observed that he had given them too serious a character. ‘Now, Mr. Gibson,’ said he, ‘I should prefer to see the Duchess modelled with that cheerful gay look, as she appears when receiving her friends.’ ‘I then replied (and who that knows Gibson will not see the resolute face

and hear the decided voice as he thus spoke),
“The expression of cheerfulness and gaiety is beneath the dignity of sculpture, yes—beneath the dignity of sculpture.”’

To return to his first visit to England in 1844. On that occasion the admiration of his Liverpool friends rose to that pitch which finds only adequate vent in a public dinner. Such tributes to eminent artists had been somewhat in vogue—Wilkie had received the same from the Scotch in Rome—Thorwaldsen from the Germans in Rome—David Roberts in Edinburgh—it was natural that Liverpool should bestow the same honour on one who from his early residence among them was claimed as a townsman. But the compliment paid to the sculptor at Glasgow was more flattering still from the absence of all ties of birth or residence. Gibson had executed the statue of Mr. Kirkman Finlay, for the Merchants’ Hall in that city. It arrived at its destination during his stay in England in 1844, and he visited Glasgow to witness its erection. The principal gentlemen of Glasgow took advantage of his presence among them to give him a public dinner. ‘I was much gratified,’ he writes, ‘by the kindness shown me in Glasgow, and surprised to see so many public monuments, and all

by the best sculptors. I thought the statue of General Sir John Moore by Flaxman one of his best, as also that of Watt by Chantrey. I examined the equestrian statue of the Duke of Wellington by Marochetti—the horse is very clever.

‘I stayed at the house of my hospitable friends, Mr. and Mrs. Graham Gilbert, and during my stay he painted my portrait, which he afterwards presented to the Academy there.’

During this visit to England Gibson was honoured with Her Majesty’s commands to execute a statue of herself. This announcement at first rather disconcerted the simple sculptor. ‘I don’t know how to behave to Queens,’ he said. But Mrs. Huskisson came to the rescue, and after giving him a few instructions, she added, ‘all you have to remember with Her Majesty is to call her Madam, and treat her like a lady.’ Soon after this he was summoned to an interview with the lamented Prince Consort at Windsor, to whom with characteristic simplicity he immediately propounded two questions which he feared might offer difficulties. The first was his habit in portrait-sculpture of measuring the features of the sitter with compasses—an operation which in the instance of Her Majesty he suggested that the Prince

should perform for him. His Royal Highness assured him in reply that the Queen would permit everything he might think necessary. The second question was to him the all-important point of the class of dress in which Her Majesty would please to be represented. Here again he was at once relieved by the Prince's assurances that they desired the statue to be classically draped. 'We wish it to be like a Greek statue, and the Queen wishes you to execute it in Rome.' The Prince then entered into an animated conversation on Rome, art, and artists, and immediately impressed the sculptor with a sense of those remarkable qualities which captivated all who had the privilege of approaching him. So engaging and interesting indeed was this royal young man—then only twenty-four years of age—in manner and conversation, that Gibson forgot all Mrs. Huskisson's little lessons on etiquette, and, making his bow, quietly turned his back, and only recollected himself in time to 'face about' before he left the room.

Shortly after this interview Gibson spent several days at Windsor, during which time Her Majesty sat to him with ungrudging patience, while the Prince, in Gibson's words, made 'good

and correct remarks.' It is evident that the royal couple soon did justice to the artless character of the sculptor, conversing freely and kindly with him, 'so that I have not only been at perfect ease, but happy in their presence. One day I had spoken of our custom at Rome of repeating our works from the same model. The Queen said to the Prince, who entered, "Mr. Gibson has executed his Cupid seven times. You must not, Mr. Gibson, repeat my statue." "No, Madam, but will your Majesty have any objection if I present your bust in marble to the people of Liverpool, to be placed in St. George's Hall?" She said, "Oh! no." The Prince added, "That is kind of you." I said that Mr. Roscoe was my first friend who called me forth, and that it was my Liverpool friends who sent me to Rome. His Royal Highness said, "Well, Mr. Gibson, you are an example to the people of Liverpool to send out more young men to Rome."'

In a letter to his friend Mrs. Lawrence from Innsbrück, July 21, 1845, he writes: 'Before I left Rome I had finished the full-sized model of her Majesty. I can assure you it cost me much deep reflection and careful study. I was ordered to make it the size of life, so that it required

management to preserve in a small figure the look and air of one presiding over us—that air of dignity and firmness, yet softened by a touch of mildness and grace which her Majesty really has. To mark all this with simplicity and natural ease, without affectation, has been my aim. My statue has none of those usual symbols of a Queen—such as the crown, the royal robes, and the ball and sceptre. I have tried to give royalty in the look and action. The Sovereign is represented presiding over the affairs of the nation, holding in the left hand the laws, which she grasps tight with her little fingers, and in the right the laurel crown which she is about to bestow. But the action has not taken place, but is about to commence, so that the figure is in repose, and the spectator anticipates the action. The classical costume enables me to give elegance and grace to the lines of my statue, and also lightness. The corners of the mantle are adorned with the emblems of the three kingdoms, and on her head is a diadem, on which in flat relief dolphins are sporting upon the waves of the sea.’

In a letter to Sir Charles Eastlake, April 1846, he thus mentions this work. ‘The Queen’s statue is advancing in marble, and will be finished early

next winter—you remember how pleased I was with his Royal Highness for desiring me to dress the statue classically. I have always watched attentively the effect of this Iconic statue upon the people here, who have crowded to see it ever since I modelled it. None have complained of the drapery, but they have admired its richness. It is true that the portrait statue of a lady does not thus suffer so great a transformation as that of a man.’

It was in this statue of Her Majesty that Gibson first broke through the usual limits of modern sculpture and introduced a little colour. He thus writes to Mrs. Sandbach—December 17, 1846—Rome. ‘Since my return to Rome I have given myself up body and soul to finishing the Queen’s statue, and have wrought her up as high as possible. My enthusiasm has also carried me beyond the practice of sculptors, for I have added colour. The diadem, sandals and borders of drapery, are tinted with blue, red and yellow. Since this statue has been finished my studio has been constantly visited, and it makes a greater impression than the model did. . . . I must tell you, however, that the English are startled at my having painted Her Majesty. They do not

know what to make of it. Some like it, and say that the painting is done with so much delicacy that they cannot help admiring it, but most of them condemn, and some run it down even before seeing it. Some express the suspicion that Prince Albert told me to colour it, otherwise I would not have dared to do it. I have answered "No, the Prince knows nothing about it. I have done it to please myself." Yes—I know that it will be universally condemned. Williams was always against the idea of colouring sculpture—would never listen to me—but, when he saw me determined, he assisted me in producing the delicate effect which it has—and now he is a convert, so he says. Wyatt is against it, but the Italian sculptors and painters as well as the Germans admire the effect. My eyes have now become so depraved that I cannot bear to see a statue without colouring. I say this to the people, "*Whatever the Greeks did was right*"—that ought to be our law in art, in sculpture.'

To return to the biography. 'The statue arrived in England, and agreeable to my request it was allowed to be sent to the Royal Academy, where it proved a fine bone for the writers on art to pick. I had arrived also in London and was

again lodged with Mrs. Huskisson. One day I received commands to attend at Buckingham Palace. After waiting a short time his Royal Highness entered. He was gracious, and giving me his hand said, "Well, I wished to tell you that the Queen and myself have been to the Exhibition of the Royal Academy and seen the statue, and I am happy to say that the Queen is very much pleased with it, and so am I"—he added laughing "colour and all." He observed at the same time that he had seen in one of the morning papers a violent attack upon it. I assured his Royal Highness that if I lived they would have a stronger dose of polychrome.'

Gibson will return to the disputed subject of colour further on. The statue of the Queen excited great admiration among the small public competent to judge. If the shortness of stature was a difficulty which he successfully overcame, some of the most conspicuous beauties are Her Majesty's own, for the hands and arms were cast from herself. He was commissioned to execute a replica. This second figure suffered two serious risks before arriving at completion. The first was from an inundation of the Tiber, which threatened the foundations of Gibson's studio—the

second from the French bombardment of Rome, which especially burst over that quarter. A notice of Mr. Wyatt the sculptor, just mentioned, will introduce this incident, and at the same time record the generous justice which Gibson did to him.

‘ Nearly opposite my door lived a rival—that rival was Richard Wyatt, who had also studied in Rome for many years with indefatigable labour. He, like myself, had been the scholar of Canova, though not for any length of time, for that great sculptor died in 1822, when we both of us had recourse to Thorwaldsen for instruction.

‘ Wyatt had acquired the purest style, and his statues were highly finished—female figures were his forte, and he was clever in composition and in the harmony of lines. Drapery was also a great study with him. His statues are remarkably refined in character, and graceful in action. He had a strong feeling for the beautiful. His practice was generally as follows. Whenever he made a clay sketch for a new subject he would put it out of sight for several months, and then bring it out upon trial. If it still pleased him he would then begin his clay model life size, availing himself of as many living models as he could obtain, and he always cast the joints when these parts were

beautiful in nature. Indeed the Roman sculptors make a great study of the joints, hands and feet.

‘There was a compact between Wyatt and myself, which was to point out each other’s defects unreservedly, and I always felt that each benefited by the judgment of the other. Besides this general rivalry between Wyatt and myself in what concerned art there was another point of competition in which I must confess he was generally my superior—namely in his habit of early rising. For though I always arrived at the Caffè Greco for breakfast before sunrise, I constantly found him already established there, sitting with a wax taper in his hand, reading the daily papers over his coffee. As soon as daylight dawned we proceeded to take our usual walk on the Pincio, and after half an hour’s exercise descended the hill to our studios in the Via Fontanella, Babuino.

‘In the year 1849 we were greatly disturbed by the public commotions of Rome. I cannot say that the Italians actually molested any of us, but it was most disagreeable to be in a place in such a state of uproar. When the French arrived at Civita Vecchia I advised my friend Wyatt to join me in leaving Rome, but though not doubting that the French would bombard the city he had no

desire to leave, but, on the contrary, wished to witness whatever might happen.

‘Meanwhile the statue of Her Majesty had been finished and was in the hands of the polisher, who was now disturbed in his labours by some communications threatening assassination. He was considered to be a *‘nero,’* as the Pope’s party were called, the more so as his son was a priest. I therefore advised him to leave Rome for Porto d’Anzio, and he took my advice. In due time the French army advanced to within four miles of our walls, and then I ran away too, leaving not only my companion but all my statues to their fate. I went to Florence and then on to the Baths of Lucca, where I received a letter from Wyatt. He reported that the French were making preparations to attack the city on the side of the Piazza del Popolo. Anticipating therefore a bombardment close to our studios, he had entered mine with some men—moved the statue of the Queen to a corner of the room, and there erected a penthouse of strong planks over it, so that if shells or balls broke through the roof they would roll off. Three days after this the attack began, about three o’clock in the morning. Wyatt was startled out of his sleep by the thunder of artillery, the hissing

of the shells, and the smashing of the tiles of the houses round about. He jumped out of his bed, which was immediately under the roof, and came down the winding stair to his working rooms, which were on the ground floor. Soon the voice of war became louder and louder, when in an instant a grenade came through the window into the room where he stood, and burst: one bit knocked the light out of his hand, and another grazed his shoulder—his arm was benumbed, and he was left in the dark in the midst of smoke and dust. He added, “I had a very narrow escape.” A shell had also fallen close to the door of my own studio, when the women opposite seeing flames and smoke cried out, “The Englishman’s studio is on fire!” but the shell did no harm.

‘The movement of the French towards this side of the city was merely a feint to conceal their real point of attack, which was in fact on Mount Gianicolo, where they actually entered near the Porta San Pancrazio. . . .

‘No sculptor in England has produced female statues to be compared to those by Wyatt, and the judges at the Great Exhibition in London of 1851 very justly awarded him one of the four first-class

gold medals. This honour was conferred on him after his death, for he died in 1850. . . .

‘Mr. Wyatt’s relations were going to erect a small monument over his grave at Rome, but I requested as a friend to be allowed to perform that duty. I have done so, and have sculptured his handsome profile, with the following inscription :

TO THE MEMORY

OF RICHARD WYATT, SCULPTOR,

Born in London on the 3rd of May, 1795; died in Rome
on the 28th of May 1850.

He practised his art in Rome 29 years. His works are universally admired for their purity of taste, grace, and truth of nature. The productions of his genius adorn the royal palaces of England, St. Petersburg, and Naples, as well as the residences of the nobility and gentry of his own country. He was remarkable for his modesty, his high sense of honour, and his benevolence. Erected by John Gibson, Sculptor, as a token of friendship and admiration.

CHAPTER VII.

The Concessions of Pio Nono—Emancipated Liberals—Gibson's Trials and Reflections—The Pope's Constitution—Reports current in Rome—The Austrian Escutcheon—The Volunteers—Revolt of National Guard—Murder of Punch—Murder of Count Rossi—The Little Waiter—The Prohibited Knife—The Madman—Garibaldi—The French within sight of Rome—Gibson's retreat.

WE here return somewhat on our steps to a period extending from 1847 to 1849, when Gibson's biography and correspondence are full of the tumults and passions which agitated Rome. If he has no pretensions to be considered as a political oracle, he at any rate records events and registers impressions indicative of the spirit of the time. Not that the perfect accuracy of his descriptions can be depended on, for though no man living was ever more truthful, yet his mind was too intensely subjective for it to give forth any very graphically correct impressions. He simply told things as he saw them and understood them. In his own peculiar blocking-out style he gives a survey of the reforms and concessions granted by the Pope—the liberty of the

press—the establishment of political clubs—the appointment of a National Guard—all preceded by agitations and celebrated by demonstrations which signalised equally the popularity and the helplessness of the Holy Father—finally delivering his soul in this ominous ejaculation, ‘Ah! Pio! I think of thee when I watch the spider and the fly in the corner of my modelling room. . . .

‘When Pio Nono first stood forth, encircled by a new and brilliant halo, he raised his hand—the prison gates fell—patriots were liberated—exiles rushed back to their native land. The Romans and the provinces testified their gratitude by splendid processions, bands, flags, and singing hymns all the way to the Quirinal. Upon these occasions the feelings of the good Pontiff have often been touched—covering his face with his handkerchief. Behold Rome full of emancipated Liberals from all parts. The Pope receives the most talented men at his palace—he said to them, “You are the very men I want to help me in my work.”

‘But the day comes when the good Pontiff says to his beloved Romans, “You ask me for what I cannot give, ought not to give.” What are these clouds that intercept the rays of the sun from the

brows of Pio? Still he gives way. "Out with the Governor of Rome!" He goes out. An idol of the people is put in his place. After a while, "Out with him too!" and out he goes. Then the Minister of War won't do. "Out with him!" and another is put in his place. There is no end to their demands—out with this person, down with that. "Out with the police, death to the Jesuits!" Every day "Death to the Jesuits!" is heard as they walk in the streets. Their deportment is dignified, and so calm. "Oh! National Guard! you are getting unruly, too many of you are seen disorderly on the Corso. At length Pio drives in state through the streets to calm the people—he is well received, but the cry is "*Viva Pio Nono solo!*"'

Personally too Gibson had his share of abuse and anxiety. Hitherto he had lived in peace—one of his quiet boasts being that his name never appeared on the Roman police books. Rome, at that time, was like an angry sea, which cast up mire and dirt—some of which was aimed especially at the English residents. The ill will, always more or less existing among the ranks of inferior foreign artists against the successful English sculptors and painters, came now unrestrainedly to the surface. 'Bad passions show

themselves,' he writes, 'from the artist quarters, and I am sorry that higher persons participate in the feeling that we English sculptors, settling here, have been injurious to the Italians.' An attempt was made, by means of agitation, to compel them to serve in the National Guard. According to Gibson, some English artists did so, but they were young and active and fit for the night-work, which was our sculptor's particular dread. 'A corporal and guard have been three times to arrest Wyatt because he has not taken up his gun to serve in the National Guard. His lameness has been his excuse, and he is let alone for the present.' Gibson also suffered from his throat, and from rheumatism, and was furnished with a medical certificate. 'Meanwhile the most horrid article I ever read has come out against us in a Roman paper called "*La Pallade*"—that, "having come among us beggars, and made something of a fortune—we say nothing of their talents—they now refuse to serve in the National Guard. Such can only be made to obey the '*linguaggio del nodoso bastone*.'" Freeborn (the English Consul) is stated to have censured us for our cowardice, and to have threatened to write to Lord Palmerston.' Gibson thus philosophises on

it to Mrs. Sandbach. 'I have never spoken to my countrymen of the bad feelings of the Italian sculptors here. It is disagreeable to think of. But human nature is so defective. Nobleness is only to be found in a few individuals. When I was in England * * * * said to me "Here you have a vicious press against you." At Rome I may say I am surrounded by those who have wilder passions.

'If you meddle with Fame you cannot pass a life of tranquillity. I have sometimes thought that had I been a gardener—yours—I should have been happier—married to one of your maids—to that little one with the funny cap. But perhaps she would not have had me! Williams is in sad spirits—he thinks his suffering eyes will not save him from the disgusting night-work. I fear too—but we shall see. In case of a grand burst I have thought I would slip away with Ben and Williams to the Ionian Islands for a year, and wait events.'

Just at this time too there came an arrow from England in the shape of a fierce and ignorant attack on his statue of Huskisson, and not only upon that, but also, by a strange perversion of æsthetic criticism, on Mrs. Huskisson for having

presented it to the people of Liverpool. This occasions an outburst from this most placable and benevolent of men, who spoke in his haste what we should hesitate to give could it be possibly viewed in any but a humorous light. 'Feb. 21, 1848. I am sorry "the vicious press" has been so coarse with her. As for their attacking my work, it is a proof that it gives them pain. In a professional view I feel as if between two batteries—one in London, the other here. Yes—I agree with old King David. I say, curse all my enemies—those in London and those at Rome too. I won't forgive my enemies—it's foolish to do so. Now if you had been near me you would have stopped my pen and said "Oh erase that sentence—throw away that pen and take a clean one from my hand and write of your enemies with magnanimity."'. Then returning to what was around him, 'We old artists now begin to hope that they do not intend to force us into this service. I hope they will leave us alone and manage their affairs themselves. We shall soon see how liberty works with them here. The Sardinians it will do for, for the people are more enlightened, and so they are in Tuscany.

— 'There is an English Catholic here, a friend of

the Pope, who is anxious that I should undertake a bust of His Holiness for him. The Pope also would sit to me. But I hold back because I fear that my Italian rivals would be more sore. I would rather not meddle with it. At the same time I have great respect and admiration for His Holiness. I hope his subjects will turn out worthy of him.'

The 29th March he writes again to Mrs. Sandbach. 'For some time past old Rome has been shaking with agitation. A party here got up a report which became general that on the last day of the Carnival every German was to be killed. That day arrived, and all the troops were out, with a grand force of National Guards. Nothing happened, and the last day of the fun ended peaceably. Rome slept in the arms of tranquillity—awoke next morning with brighter hopes of the future.

'All were glad when the Carnival was over. But alas! here is a new calamity! all devout people are struck with awe—horrid sacrilege has been committed in St. Peter's, and prayers are offered up by the order of the Pope. The head of St. Andrew has been stolen. It was enclosed in a bust of silver, adorned with pre-

cious stones. A large reward is offered for its recovery.

‘The 15th of March was a day, new, extraordinary and memorable for the Romans. The long expected Constitution of Pio Nono appeared upon the walls. In the afternoon the people and the National Guard went by thousands and thousands to the Quirinal to thank the Pope, the first proclaimer of Italian liberty. The National Guard are beautifully yet simply dressed. The costume was designed by Canevari—but why dress infantry with helmet and red horse-hair, and with the short, straight antique sword? The answer is that they may be as much as possible like the antique Romans. When all were assembled the Pope came to the balcony. There stood the splendidly robed Pontiff—the truly pious and just—the champion of liberty. The rays of that sun, which has witnessed the thousand vicissitudes of the Eternal City fell upon His Holiness with glowing brightness. The shout of “Viva Pio Nono!” from the emancipated Romans was sublime. He then gave a prayer, to which all responded, and the voice of the multitude fell on my ears like the voice of the disturbed ocean restored to tranquillity. He

made no speech, but gave the benediction, when the people rose again and the "Vivas" were deafening. The compact battalions of the National Guard were splendid, and their arms glittered like a forest of sparkling glass and gold, for every man raised his brass helmet upon his bayonet, and the numerous standards with golden eagles waved to and fro. Above them were the majestic statues of Castor and Pollux, while the parting rays of the setting sun fell softly upon the affecting scene.

'And the day departed with its brightness, and the night came with its darkness, but the Everlasting remaineth unchanged—the stars shone, and God, the living, the merciful, looked upon the creation.'

And Gibson returned home to muse over the Aurora and 'The Gliding Hours,' which were then under his modelling hand. 'About ten o'clock the other morning I went out—crowds in the streets and collecting by hundreds in the Corso. "What's going to take place now?" said I. "Revolution in Vienna—*gran novità*—the Emperor of Austria a prisoner in the hands of the people." Soon printed papers were circulated, confirming all to a word. Hangings and flags out

of all the windows in the Corso, the bell of the Capitol and others sounding, and perpetual firing of light arms. This was not enough. Hundreds went in procession to the palace of the Austrian ambassador—twelve of the leaders entered, and found the ambassador with his family at breakfast. They requested him politely to take down the Imperial arms over his entrance, for the Emperor was dethroned. He assured them that he had no intimation of such an event, and refused to comply. They retired, got a ladder; the crowd was great, and began their work. It took them more than an hour to get the escutcheon loose—at last down it came, and was trampled on. Then they procured an ass, and a little hump-backed dwarf happening to be near, they made him get on to the back of the ass with the arms. Thus they proceeded up the Corso in grand procession to the Piazza del Popolo. There were thousands of the people. At the Piazza del Popolo a large fire was made—numbers of carriages were there, and English ladies and other nations looking on. Oh, would that you had been there to describe the scene!—the figures round the fire, roaring with demoniac shouts, the screams of furious ecstasy as the two-headed eagle was tri-

umphantly raised aloft and then thrown into the flames. Then the hands that did the deed were held up with outstretched fingers quivering convulsively with mad joy—their dark faces and long black beards looking still darker by the effect of the white smoke which ascended above the obelisk. Besides tearing down the arms from the ambassador's Palace, they were also torn down from the Austrian church, and from other places.

‘But the business was not to end here. Three hours after, a grand procession was got up from the Popolo down the Corso to the Palace of the Senators. There were thousands—masses of the plebeians and also of a better sort, and some like gentlemen—numbers too of the soldiers of the line and National Guards, and plenty of low priests with the tricolor on their breasts. This mixture walked in lines arm and arm—flags flying and military bands playing. Still the business did not end here. They illuminated all Rome. During all these proceedings not a lamp nor a window was broken—nor any individual of any nation insulted. Then they had a splendid bonfire in the Corso, which was one flare. When the lights were to be put out the leaders of this affair fired a gun, the people obeyed and all went to their homes.

‘Now the Government has formed the plan of sending off some thousands of this rabble—with volunteers from the National Guard and also the regular troops to conduct them. The young Romans are mad to fight against the Austrians. An English artist yesterday saw two thousand going off—some of them in rags, and many decently dressed plebeians. Their mothers, sisters, and others were there. Near my friend a fine tall young girl cried out to her lover, “Augusto mio!—be of good animo—we meet again, and be sure you bring me the head of a German;”—then other women cried out, “Yes, bring us their heads.” A day or two before all these had marched to the Coliseum, where their names were enrolled, and where an eloquent priest had addressed them, inspiring them with a love of their country, and bidding them drive out the “straniero.” You have no idea of the enthusiasm.

‘All the inhabitants are invited to subscribe money to send off these volunteers. We, being residents here, I consulted our consul as to the propriety of our subscribing. Wyatt and I thought we ought not to subscribe, as they professed to go to fight against Austria; but Freeborn said the Pope had prohibited his subjects from crossing the fron-

tier—they are to form a line of observation. He said he had already subscribed thirty crowns—I then put down twenty, and Wyatt also twenty. Two months ago I subscribed fifty crowns to dress the National Guards. At the subscriptions yesterday I saw several ladies' bracelets, and all sorts of women's ornaments.'

Then occasionally our sculptor retires for a space into the haven of his own ruminations. 'I have never heard of Jean Paul—tell me more about him. I admire his sentiments as to the impression which the Greek statues made upon his mind. I like this, "The repose of perfection, *not* of weariness;" also, "These Gods appear before me and recall to me the laws of beauty." When I walk in the assembly of the Greek statues I feel as if I had left the earth with all its imperfections. I am surrounded by divine beauty, imperishable—which I find nowhere else. The majesty, the noble calm, the perfect symmetry which surrounds me, makes me forget for a moment that I am a poor mortal. I feel as if I were remodelled—yes—perfect in body and soul. But I must shut the door upon the Gods, and come down upon the earth.'

Then come wars and rumours of wars, and dread-

ful stories about the atrocities of the Austrians at Milan, fabricated and circulated among the Roman people—‘roasting people by slow fires—bags full of ladies hands’ for the sake of the rings—babies carried through the streets upon the points of their bayonets, and so on. This is the way with these people—when a Roman quarrels with another, even among fashionable families, you are shocked by the horrid scandal they will tell of each other. . . . We fear that a French army will enter Italy—in that case there will be a general conflict, and I shall be a prisoner here. Mr. Ben cannot live in England, and I should not like to desert him. Besides, I want to finish my basso-rilievo of the Hours. I think it the best composition I have ever done. . . . We have not yet had any German heads, but a trophy was sent from the field. It is the bloody waistcoat of a German, shot in the breast, and was exhibited at the Caffè Greco before great crowds of people. Many of my friends went to see it.’

Meanwhile the revolt of the National Guard took place. ‘Behold the Corso crowded with people—for three days they roar and thunder from the clubs. One orator proposes to arrest the Pope at once—another from the club windows

cries out, "To the Vatican—the Vatican! there proclaim the revolution." Some of the National Guard inflamed with hell fire and fury curse the Pope, and call him degrading names, tearing from their heartless breasts his medals, and trampling on them. Then they took possession of the Castle of St. Angelo, and of all the gates of Rome. For four days no one could go out of the city except foreigners with travelling carriages and passports—how the English did fly! Then the storm was directed against the cardinals—we expected the old gentlemen would be sent to heaven. The National Guard made them prisoners in their own houses. One of them said, "By whose authority am I a prisoner in my house?" "It is the order of our captain." "Who is your captain?" "S. the painter."

• 'It was the third day of their confinement, when lo! at five o'clock in the morning, I read a proclamation from the Pope. At the end he says, "E non rispettando nemmeno le Persone, calpestando ogni diritto, tenta (o, Gran Dio, li si gela il cuore nel pronunziarlo!) di tingere le vie della capitale del mondo cattolico col sangue di venerande Persone, designate vittime innocenti, per saziare le volontà sfrenate di chi non vuol ragionare. E

sarà questo il compenso che si attendeva un Pontefice sovrano ai moltiplicati tratti dell' amor suo verso il popolo !”

“Popule meus! quid feci tibi?” Then he goes on to say that their conduct will throw an odium upon their own cause in the face of the whole world, and then he hints at excommunication!

‘At nine in the morning there was to have been a great meeting at the Piazza del Popolo—no meeting—all Rome was paralysed by the threat of excommunication, and they gradually quieted down. The moment the Cardinals were at liberty they fled to the Pope’s palace, where they have been for many days. Since those events people have been able to sleep more calmly. You see how Pio by the rapidity of his reforms has destroyed his power, and sunk into that of the mob.’

Meanwhile there was disunion in the camp of the National Guards—the Trasteverini (those who live over the Tiber) were the first to return to their allegiance. ‘The Trasteverini have ever been staunch to the Popes: they will fight for the Vicar of God. The battalion marches out with their officers, band, and standards with laurel crowns, and with four men in plain clothes carry-

ing a large square cushion, crimson velvet trimmed with gold, upon which is placed a large bunch of flowers. The band strikes up, and they march to the Quirinal. The disappointed, disgusted Pio, had shut himself up for many days with his Cardinals. Once more he hears "Viva Pio Nono," and appears on the balcony and blesses them. The commander prays His Holiness to allow the battalion to kiss his foot, and then marches into the Palace preceded by the four men carrying the bunch of flowers—the officer presents it, kneels and kisses the Pope's foot, and then the whole company one after the other do the same.

' This circumstance troubled the rebelled guards—but soon they made up their minds to do the same, and so a battalion goes every day with a bunch of flowers on a crimson cushion to kiss the Pope's foot. Nevertheless Pio is still sulky—he won't go out to take his usual drive. . . . A Roman duke whom I have known for years, and who has always been a Liberal, said to me, "Ever since the Pope has given his constitution Rome has never suffered under such tyranny. No man dare open his mouth—no printer dare publish an article on the side of equity, order, and justice. The party of religion and order blame the Pope for his bad

management; they feel that he has disorganised society and placed their lives and property in danger.”

This was doubtless uttered after the fate of poor ‘Punch,’ who had paid for his honesty with his life. ‘A new paper appeared here called *Cassandrino* (Punch), very clever and sarcastic. Punch claims the liberty of the press, and to the surprise of everybody avails himself of it. This little paper had a great run—everybody reading it. He touched up the acts and proceedings of the Liberals, and was very hard upon the Roman warriors who, against the orders of their sovereign, crossed over the confines to fight the “barbarians.” The editor of Punch was a priest, aged thirty. Soon he received a polite hint to drop his paper, or he would be assassinated. Punch published the polite hint, and, to the amazement of the public, continued the paper. As to the threat, he wrote “Do you intend to give me the blow in the back or in front?” The day before yesterday at ten in the evening Punch was killed. The bold, clever priest was struck by the assassin with a very fine narrow dagger in the neck; the point came out at the other side. He gave a cry, fell, and was dead in

a minute. I should think this act will terrify the Romans from using the liberty of the press. Punch did not meddle with individuals, but wrote upon the general doings of the Liberals, with many useful and good truths.'

This was written in July 1848. Six months later a higher representative of constitutional liberty fell a victim, and the depraved and unreasoning people—with the utter unfitness for liberty which centuries of the worst possible government had entailed upon them—hailed with impious rejoicings the shedding of that blood which has ever since been a plague-spot upon their cause.

'One day when I was working in my studio two English friends entered and said "Have you heard the news?" I said "My man tells me that Count Rossi has been assassinated—but I can't believe it." Then they said "Put on your coat and come with us." I did so and went with them to the Corso, where we found every house on each side with flags and tapestry, purple and gold, displayed in token of rejoicing at the horrid event which had just taken place. In the evening of that day insulting songs were sung under the window of the widow, who was that

night conveyed in a private carriage of the Pope's to Civita Vecchia.

‘Now the Pope himself has fled from his emancipated Liberals. They are in—he is out. Numbers of his windows were broken by the balls, and his Latin secretary—an old man—killed. The Swiss were the only faithful servants. Since the Pope left the storm has gradually increased—still some English families have lingered—among them are Lord and Lady M. with their children. One day I was dining with them when their English physician entered. “What news, doctor?” said her ladyship; “how are they getting on?” “Badly” said he, and then told us this story. As he was coming from St. Peter's, and just as he had crossed the bridge of St. Angelo, he saw a mob of people advancing with two prisoners—common-looking men—one with his head bound round with a bloody handkerchief. By this time the doctor was close to them, when a wretch with a bayonet came to the back of one of the prisoners and ran him through—the bayonet entering between the pelvis bone and the last rib. The victim fell on his face, when others fell upon him and kept stabbing him and also the other prisoner who was on the ground. There were

pools of blood, and the doctor saw men, and women too, collecting the blood in their hands and washing their faces with it, clapping their streaming hands aloft, and crying out "Throw them into the Tiber." The doctor had enquired what they had done, and was told they were Jesuits in disguise. The bodies were then dragged by the heels upon the bridge of St. Angelo, and thrown over into the Tiber. So there was an end of them. Afterwards it was proved that the men were poor workmen, and slaughtered under a mistake. All of us listened with great attention to the doctor's statement, and her ladyship looked uncomfortable.

'I bade good night to my lord and family and walked home alone. The streets at eleven o'clock at night were very lonely, and I met only now and then a single person, and no one would allow another to come near—but kept on one side. I did the same, keeping wide apart and having small pistols loaded—all this precaution arose from the fear of being stabbed. . . .

'I will mention an incident which occurred to me soon after Pio Nono gave his general amnesty. At that period I used to dine at a trattoria in the Piazza di Spagna. One day, seated by my friend Penry

Williams, the well-known painter, I said, "Observe that little man, how his eyes are fixed upon me." He was short, rich black hair and beard—his eyes bright. He advances right up to me. "Signor *Gipison*," said he, "you do not seem to know me." "Who are you?" said I. "Have I not waited upon you at this table three years ago?" "Bentornato!—where have you been all this while?" "In the galleys," said he. "What for?" "Signor *Gipison*, I am a Patriot." I bowed to him, and said "Capisco—I suppose you are indebted to Pio Nono for the liberty which you are now enjoying." "I am," he replied. "I advise you not to lose your liberty again." I then enquired of my friend where he had been imprisoned. He said, "At Civita Castellana. I was condemned for seven years. The castle was crowded with political prisoners. The poor ones were upon short allowance—the sons of the rich were supplied with money and permitted to purchase what they liked." He added that he was himself fortunate, for having learnt a little cooking while waiting in the *trattoria* the gentlemen prisoners elected him their cook—so he was well off as to feeding. Then he said with an air of importance and affected modesty, "And, Signor

Gipison, I am a poet." I bowed again. He said, "Yes—I was elected cook and poet to the Patriots of Civita Castellana." "In what class of poetry did you exercise your talents?" "I employed my humble abilities in writing epigrams." "And what were your subjects?" "Liberty and Equality—I also touched up the Church and the priests—my poetry amused my fellow prisoners, but they did not all agree with my opinions upon religion. But my skill as a cook gave universal satisfaction." I said to him, "With respect to the art of cookery Athenæus relates that there was once a cook in Greece who acquired great renown because he could roast one half of a pig, while the other half was boiling." "Ah! Signor Gipison, those ancient Greeks were great liars, but they could fight for liberty." . . .

'My friend Wyatt used at that time to dine at a trattoria in the Via Condotti, where he made acquaintance with an Irish priest who had just come to Rome, and whom he found very gentlemanly and agreeable. One evening at dusk Wyatt and the priest came out of the trattoria together and bade each other good night. Wyatt turned to the Piazza di Spagna and the priest walked down the Via Condotti. After proceeding

some way (as he afterwards told Wyatt) a little man with bright black eyes, rich black hair and beard, suddenly struck at his throat with a knife ; but the priest, equally quick, saved his throat, and the knife struck him in the palm of his hand. The assassin directly repeated the blow, and again the priest warded it off, and received another wound in his hand. Two young men of the National Guard, who saw the act at a little distance, ran up with their drawn swords, and the first who reached them cried out to the assassin, "If you stir I will run you through." The man then gave himself up. The priest, bleeding very much, was taken to an hospital in the Corso, where his wounds were dressed. One day the priest was summoned to attend at the prison. He went there and was conducted to a room where stood a row of prisoners. He was told if he saw among them the man who had stabbed him, to go up and put his finger on him. The priest instantly touched one of them, and the man turned out to be no other than my little friend the waiter, cook, patriot, poet, and assassin. He was tried, convicted, and condemned to fifteen years in the galleys. This happened previous to the Pope's departure from Rome.

‘A few months after this affair, whilst I was dining again at the trattoria, I heard great rejoicings in the house, and asked a waiter what caused them. He replied with great excitement that the Government (of the Triumvirs) had liberated my little friend from the galleys. “But,” said I, “he was condemned under the Pope’s Government to fifteen years’ imprisonment, for attempting the life of the Irish priest.” The fellow then said, “As it was only a priest he stabbed, they have liberated him.” I understood afterwards that this rogue confessed that he thought the priest was an Italian. Some time after I heard that the little fellow had been fortunate at last, for that he had gone to London and married a “Signora inglese.” This latter piece of information I confess I considered to be untrue.

‘I once saw a procession going down the Corso—it was a young man upon an ass. On his breast was a label, on which was stated that he was guilty of carrying the prohibited knife. He was accompanied by a guard of soldiers on each side of him and by a crowd of people. He was started from the Piazza del Popolo to the end of the Corso, and at the Piazza di Venezia

there was a stage erected on which he was to stand for a time to be looked at. When he ascended the steps and got on the stage he turned round facing the people, raised his right hand aloft, with the thumb and two fingers up, and the third and little finger bent down, and with an air of benign majesty he gave the people the benediction in imitation of the Holy Father. For this act of impiety he was retained in prison for an additional term.

‘The prohibited knife is a real dagger which shuts up like a clasp knife, but it is made on purpose for assassination. When the state of disturbance was at its height these prohibited knives were publicly sold and carried about in the streets of Rome. I had a proof of this fact at the time in a rather distressing manner. One evening I was sitting in the caffè in the Piazza di Spagna, when in came a man whom I knew. He kept a shop of objects of virtù, and had been for years occasionally afflicted with fits of madness. Whenever the fit came on notice was sent to the authorities, and he was taken to the madhouse and kept till he was better. During our Republic the man was not taken sufficient care of. His fit had been upon him for some days. He recognised me in the

caffè, and seating himself opposite to me he began muttering to himself very wildly. We were seated on divans which went round the little room. I could see into the next room, and I saw a pedlar had just entered and put his basket on the marble table. The madman also saw him and went and looked into the basket, when suddenly I saw him taking out the horrid instrument of vengeance—the prohibited knife. The dagger glistened in the light—he grasped it, and fixing his eyes on me, advanced upon me. I turned my eyes to the right and the left to fly, but he was before me. I sat still and felt no fear—I looked at him calmly—when suddenly he drew back the dagger and struck out with it violently at me within an inch of my body. He then said, “Signor Professore, I will give you this—take it.” I was afraid to raise my hand to receive the dagger, for fear he should change his mind and stab me. He then turned away and gave back the instrument into the basket.

‘His attack was so sudden that no one had dared to move, and there was no chair or anything within my reach for me to defend myself. I said to my friends that my life hung upon a thread, and Dr. Albites, who sat near, observed that it

was a most critical moment. Although I felt no fear at the moment, yet when the affair was over and the man gone I felt cold, and a slight tremor came on me for a short time—yes—for a short time.

‘One day, sitting in my studio looking over my book of designs, I heard a knocking at the door—street door—I rose and opened it: there stood a man who asked permission to speak to me. He entered and put a letter into my hand. At once I considered him a beggar—I had made up my mind to be uncharitable. The man was well dressed. I opened the letter; there were only four or five lines, which I read. I give it in English, having no copy of the letter, which I immediately returned to the writer. It ran as follows:

“I am a man of courage, and capable of running the risk of shedding my blood in executing anything which may concern you, and for a moderate reward I am capable of keeping any secret—full confidence may be placed in me.” “Did you write this?” I said to the man. He was an assassin, ready for a moderate sum to stab or kill anyone who might be offensive to me. As I was alone—no one near—I began to fear that he had come to stab me; but I had offended no

one, nor was I making love to the nymph of another, nor had I any enemy whom I wished to put out of the way.

‘The streets of Rome are nearly empty of all natives at an early hour of an evening. One night a friend of mine—a Roman painter of merit—told me that he was going to his home along the Corso about midnight, when his attention was arrested by a faint voice. He then saw a man lying full length in the middle of the street; the man said, “I am stabbed, and cannot move.” He was faint from loss of blood, and was afraid a carriage might drive over him. He begged my friend to drag him to the footpath. My friend instantly took him by the ankles and dragged him to the side, and then walked off as quick as possible. “But why did you leave him so?” I said. He then explained that had he been seen with the wounded man, and had the poor man expired, he should have been arrested, and confined a considerable time to be examined; to avoid such annoyance he instantly fled.’

Gibson’s first mention of Garibaldi is in Dec. 1848. ‘This independent chief is here. I saw him for the first time on Sunday last on the Monte Pincio—he rode a white horse. He is quite

young, and I have seldom seen a more beautiful head—his profile is like a statue. His dress was elegant—no coat, but a graceful frock or tunic of scarlet and a small cap ornamented with gold. On one side he had one of his cavalry officers, and on the other a gentleman in black. Garibaldi was quite a show—everyone stopping to look at him—ladies particularly. As he is beautiful, lawless and brave, he is sure to please them. He has come here to try to stir up the Romans. The other night a Roman gentleman told me Garibaldi had made speeches at the popular club to a very large assembly. At last they roared and thundered, some holding up in the air little daggers, and the National Guard their swords. Another night at the club an Italian read out, translating as he went, an article from the “Times,” showing up the Romans for the assassination of Rossi and for their treatment of the Pope. They were furious, and cried out “Morte agl’ Inglesi.” The “Times” is still flogging on. . . . Garibaldi’s manner is frank, natural, and manly. He is much esteemed by his companions in arms, and everybody speaks of his bravery, and that he does not plunder to enrich himself.’

Then, on Feb. 22, 1849, he writes, ‘You will

have heard that they have proclaimed a Republic. Every day as I go to my studio I see the Cap of Liberty, blood red, and two tricoloured flags on the top of the obelisk in the Piazza del Popolo—since then we have been quiet. How long the Republic is to last remains to be seen.’

April 28, 1849. ‘We are in the greatest excitement here—that is our republicans—as the French are at Civita Vecchia. Here is a letter from Mr. Ben just come’ (he was at Civita Vecchia for his health)—‘he says, “Having heard so much bold and heroic talking, I expected to see all the fun and to be in the midst of shells and cannon-balls—but what a disappointment! This morning, which is fine, the first steam frigate entered the port at midday and landed the troops, when not a single musket was fired against them.” Previous to landing the French General sent his proclamation, which was stuck upon the walls—he said the first cannon that fires upon the French troops will cost the inhabitants a million of francs.

‘We in Rome are in a fever—shouting and thundering “To arms, to arms!—death to the priests!—fire the churches!” Barricades are making, but the mass of the population are lukewarm. This morning all the gates are shut—they would not

allow me to go into the Villa Borghese. Mines are laying in the road as well as on the Ponte Molle. Every horse in Rome seized. Thousands are praying for the quick arrival of the French. They fear Rome will be sacked before they come. I do not think so. "What will become of us, Signor Giovanni?" said my landlady—meanwhile she is getting provisions in. . .

'Garibaldi has just entered with all his legion. They look exactly like Salvator Rosa's brigands. They have come from the frontier on the Neapolitan side. They are as dark as copper, thin, some with naked legs, with long beards, and wild black hair down their backs—brigand-pointed hats and black feathers. The lancers are very wild—poor, rough, skinny little horses. The plunder which followed consisted of asses, cattle, fowls, and blankets, of which latter they made a cloak by day and a bed by night. These wild troops marched into the Piazza S. Silvestro, and are now quartered at the Convent of S. Silvestro. When they were drawn up before the place, out came all the nuns. The crowd felt compassion for the holy virgins, but when they saw their cocks and hens, and baskets of oranges, a laugh was set up. Carriages drove the ladies off; they were veiled up.'

When the French were within a few miles of Rome, Gibson, as we have seen, ran away with Mr. Ben to the Bagni di Lucca. He returned in time to see the Pope enter under the protection of a French army, and as long as Gibson lived that protection was not withdrawn.

CHAPTER VIII.

Pio Nono's return to Rome—Walk through the Sculpture Galleries of the Vatican—Gallery of the Capitol—Sculpture in the Villa Ludovisi—Bernini.

AT the risk of some repetition I here add a letter to Mrs. Sandbach, describing his Holiness' entry into Rome, and at the same time revealing almost more than any other that quaint simplicity which charmed all who knew Gibson. 'Rome, April 24th, 1850. Many thanks for your last letter to me; I always remain long in your debt, and when I write it is but a poor return. The time is near when we shall meet once more. Since our last meeting what a way we have gone over towards that little spot in the distance—the grave! Our journey there is now shorter than ever. Methinks I have pushed on my way very quickly. I shall set out on my journey to you at the end of this month. Williams comes with me. Mr. Ben I take to Florence; then he goes to the baths of Lucca.

‘I must tell you that I went out on the 12th inst. to see the Pope enter Rome. The Romans were out by thousands and tens of thousands. His Holiness came in at the gate of S. Giovanni Laterano. When he appeared in the distance the French artillery began to thunder away, and continued for some time to split the air and our ears. Our eyes were dazzled by the numerous troops of France—at last their cavalry came in, galloping before and behind the carriage of the Pope. It was a cloudy day, but the clouds made way for the rays of the sun to fall upon the sacred head of the “Father of the faithful.” Behold that ill-used, good man, liberal and benevolent, carried back into the Eternal City upon the wings of Power—the nations have willed it.

‘The Pope descended from his carriage cheered by the crowd, and amid the waving of white handkerchiefs he entered the church of S. Giovanni. After his devotions he came out, and there he found his superb state carriage, and those of all the foreign ambassadors, and the Roman princes, and then began the splendid procession towards the Coliseum. I pushed on and took my stand to see and watch the conduct of the people—they all along cheered and waved their handker-

chiefs, and from every window all the way to St. Peter's.

‘The illumination of all Rome was the most splendid we have ever seen, and was repeated for three nights.

‘Pio Nono is the first pope who has inspired me with feelings of warmth towards him—the grand improvements he was making. One proof of his liberal intentions was selecting Count Rossi for his prime minister. He was a man of first-rate abilities, and a well-proved Liberal. The Romans proved themselves unworthy of liberty—they assassinated that great man, and in an hour the Corso windows were waving with gay flags, and thousands were rejoicing in the streets, thus celebrating and rejoicing in assassination. They proved themselves unworthy of liberty when they fired into the palace of their benefactor and shot his Latin secretary—and murdered harmless priests in the streets—and many fine things. . . .

‘The doctor has not been able to cure my right eye—still the same—the object is misty; he thinks a journey would drive it away. I told him that I am going to England. My left eye is very powerful. I see the level line on white paper at a great distance.

‘ In one of your letters you request me to get you a Roman scarf. I mentioned this to Williams ; he, being a painter, is a judge of colours ; but we decided to ask a lady friend who is rich and has good taste. She came ; I said to her that I am most ignorant of female affairs, though if Mrs. Sandbach dressed like a Greek lady I should know how to purchase the stuff, and also to cut out the dress and to dress her up in it better than her lady’s maid could. Thus you must be satisfied with what our lady friend has chosen for you. When you put it on I will tell you how you look.’

And now, after all these Roman tumults, and as if by way of compensating contrast, he takes the reader through the principal sculpture galleries of Rome, beginning with the Vatican—expatiating and explaining as he goes with a simplicity and earnestness which will recall to a favoured few his real ciceroneship through the same scenes in times gone by. We shall need no excuse for giving this part of his biographical reminiscences entire.

‘ My life in Rome has always been a very happy one, but during the turbulent times we could not pursue our labours so comfortably—therefore those long months were the most disagreeable period of my Roman residence. The Muses are said to be

silent amid the clash of arms. When the Pope was back, and Rome returned to its wonted state of serenity, we resumed our delightful labours. I read my books in tranquillity, and modelled with fresh pleasure. I then renewed my visits to the Vatican, refreshing my spirits in that Pantheon of the Gods, Demi-gods, and Heroes of Hellas.

‘These grand works of the Greeks are ever new, and always produce fresh enchantment. But in order to obtain a correct perception of their merits, and to understand the sublime and the beautiful, the taste must be cultivated by long study and experience. To surpass the best works of the Greeks is a hopeless task—to approach them is a triumph. How few can come near them !

‘The greater number of visitors who go to the Vatican collection spend too much of their time in dwelling upon inferior works—stiff, hard repetitions. But the student who has acquired some knowledge—on entering the first beautiful gallery called the Braccio Nuovo—walks up at once to the Minerva Medica with the serpent at her feet, the spear in her hand, and the helmet on her head. That statue, in my opinion, is the finest in the Vatican of the draped class. The Greeks, in their

personification of Wisdom, have given us an image worthy of their genius and philosophy. Athena is beautiful, but her beauty does not affect the passions. Her form is chaste and pure, in expression serious and thoughtful—her attitude always grand and majestic. The contemplation of such an image purifies and elevates the mind. The Minerva Medica is one of the favourites of the judges of art. It represents Athena Polios, the guardian goddess of Athens. It is probably a repetition after Phidias. It was found in the circular building on the Esquiline Hill, commonly known by the name of the Temple of Minerva Medica.

‘A few feet further on is the great statue of the Nile, with a large family of children all playing round about him. These children, sixteen in number, are an allusion to the sixteen cubits, the height to which the Nile rises, and typify the fertility which it spreads over the land. This statue was found near the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva—where anciently stood the temple of Isis and Serapis—in the pontificate of Leo the Tenth, by whom it was placed in the Vatican.

‘This splendid work of art is not a repetition, but an original production finished by the master himself. It is only the artist who has studied

Nature who can decide between an original and a copy. Here Nature is represented full and large, rather exuberant and very fleshy. The head is truly grand, and turns towards the left shoulder with a most paternal expression. The whole is in perfect repose. This great work was undoubtedly executed by some artist of no common celebrity, and is a noble study for the student.

‘ At the end of the gallery on the opposite side is the statue of Demosthenes. It is one of the finest I know, but it is a repetition. The nude part represents rather a lean person; the head is very expressive. Let us take a cast of this beautiful statue, strip it of its drapery, and model upon the figure a coat and trowsers, without omitting the cravat. All the charm we now feel in it would vanish. To me it would be a disgusting object as a work of art.

‘ Opposite to the Minerva, already described, is a statue a little larger than life—it is called Modesty, and is veiled; the same is seen on some medals which bear the inscription “Pudicitia.” This figure is richly draped. The hand over the head holding the veil is modern and clumsy. It was formerly in the Villa Mattei, and was placed in the Vatican by Clement the Fourteenth—Ganganelli.

‘ We then come to a group of Silenus and the infant Bacchus. There is another repetition in the museum at Paris which is still finer than this in the Braccio Nuovo. Silenus holds the infant Bacchus in his arms, and looks at him with an expression of pleasure and affection ; he, as well as the infant, are crowned with ivy, a plant sacred to Bacchus.

‘ Notwithstanding the destruction of Greek art we are still in possession of works representing the different characters in Nature—the highest ideal beauty, the heroic, and the common or rustic, such as we see in Fauns, Satyrs, and Silenus. But there is characteristic beauty in all—it is all selected or abstract beauty. This group of Silenus and the infant Bacchus, particularly the repetition in Paris, is a work of high excellence, and a fine study for the student.

‘ On leaving the Braccio Nuovo we find ourselves in the long narrow gallery—the Museo Chiaramonte—which leads us to the celebrated Torso. The principal things are on our right hand ; among them a fine specimen of flying drapery—a female figure, headless, in movement.

‘ Next we perceive a very striking head of Minerva, with glass eyes and a helmet, part of

which is antique. There are small holes in it, which prove that the helmet was covered with plates of gold: the ears are bored, by which it would appear that she had been decorated with earrings. The ears of the Venus di Medici are also bored, as well as those of some other fine antique heads at Rome. This invaluable specimen of Greek art, in a perfect state of preservation, was found by Mr. Fagan, the British consul, in the ruins of ancient Laurentium.

‘The finest of the many repetitions which have come down to us of Cupid bending his bow, by Praxiteles, stood in this place. How often did we dwell upon it! This beautiful statue is gone—gone for ever from Rome. Pio Nono made a present of it to the Emperor of Russia. In its place stands another repetition, but very inferior.

‘Near the Cupid is a beautiful bust of Augustus when very young; the point of the nose is restored. This bust was found at Ostia by Mr. Fagan in 1800.

‘We ascend a few steps to the Vestibolo where the torso of Hercules, commonly called “Il Torso di Belvedere,” is placed. This fragment is esteemed as one of the finest monuments of Grecian art. From the lion’s skin on the thigh it is supposed to represent a Hercules resting after his labours. It

was the object of Michael Angelo's admiration, who formed his style upon it. It is one of the few works which has come down to our time with the name of the artist inscribed. On the front of the rock on which he sits we read in Greek letters "Apollonius, son of Nestor the Athenian, made it." It was found near the church of S. Andrea della Valle, where stood the theatre of Pompey.

' Here we see too the statue of Meleager. I cannot admire this. To me it appears stiff, particularly in the limbs—the head is the best part of this work. It was found in a vineyard out of the Porta Portese, and purchased by Clement XIV.

' We now come to the Apollo Belvedere. This celebrated statue has been admired for upwards of three centuries in this very museum, and by the consent of all judges considered the finest of all the Greek specimens of ideal art which have been preserved to us. The god is here represented as having discharged his arrow either at the Python, or into the camp of the Greeks, as described by Homer, or it may be against the impious giants. The swelling of the nostrils and the disdain on the lip are so delicately expressed that the beauty of the divine countenance is undisturbed. What judgment this required! and

what a specimen it gives us of Greek refinement. No description in prose or poetry can impress the mind with an image of sublimity as this statue does. The form is refined to the highest degree of beauty, even celestial beauty. The artist who is not alive to the perfection of this marvellous statue should never attempt to give a representation of the archangel Michael. The Apollo was found at Antium, about twenty-four miles from Rome, a place famous in history from a favourite palace of the Cæsars built there, which was decorated with some of the noblest monuments of Grecian art. This statue was the property of Julius II. before he ascended the Papal throne, and was placed by him in the Vatican.

‘The Laocoön. This group is spoken of by Pliny the Elder as a first-rate work of art. It was discovered in the time of Michael Angelo (1505) in a vineyard near Rome, and immediately identified as the same mentioned by Pliny. The management of the composition and treatment of the forms is worthy of the great school of Grecian art. The expression of suffering pervades every feature and limb. It is the united work of three artists of the school of Rhodes—a father and two sons—Agesander, Polidorus, and Athenodorus.

The school of Rhodes was very famous about a hundred years before the Christian era.

‘Mercury. This fine statue was known as ‘the Antinous of the Vatican’ till the renowned antiquary Visconti came forth and pronounced it to be Mercury. It is true that the usual attributes of the Messenger of the Gods are wanting here, and that the forms are too robust, but Visconti has met this objection by recognising him here in his character of the presiding God of the Gymnasium. Some repetitions have also been found which retain parts of the Caduceus, and another which has part of the wings at the ankles. This statue was so admired by Nicolas Poussin that he made it his standard of proportion. It was found in the Baths of Hadrian near S. Martino in M^{onte}, about three centuries ago.

‘Ariadne, abandoned by Theseus in the island of Naxos. This magnificent statue had long been known by the name of Cleopatra. This was owing to the serpent-bracelet on her wrist, which antiquaries had mistaken for the asp. But Visconti has settled the question in favour of Ariadne, who, oppressed and afflicted, has laid herself down on the shore. Sleep has stolen upon her senses, but it is not the sleep of a tranquil mind; her

attitude suggests restlessness, and the upper part of the dress is somewhat disordered, exposing her lovely bosom and part of the body. This statue is in the highest style of art and admirably composed, natural and graceful. The contemplation of this grand work is always a new pleasure. It was deposited in the Vatican by Julius II., and was one of the first placed there. It is not known where it was found. The sarcophagus on which it stands describes a subject seldom met with—the War of the Giants.

‘Apollo Sauroctonos. The original was in bronze, by Praxiteles, and is mentioned by Pliny. Several copies of this most graceful statue have come down to us, and one in bronze in the Villa Albani is smaller than those in marble. The forms of this figure are refined to the highest degree of beauty and delicacy, and the composition is in accordance with the laws of art. The left arm leaning on the tree is extended forward, whilst the foot on the same side retreats back; the right arm forms an angle over the right standing leg, and the head turns gracefully over the shoulder most elevated. This arrangement produces balance, grace, and perfect harmony throughout the whole, and is at the same time

natural and easy. This repetition was found in the Palatine Hill in 1777.

‘In the same gallery with the Ariadne we come to a very favourite work, generally called “Il Genio del Vaticano.” It is a half figure of Cupid—as a grown-up youth. There exist two other repetitions of the same. One of my greatest delights is to contemplate this fragment. It is impossible to imagine a countenance more lovely, pure, serene, and spiritually beautiful. How luxurious are his waving curls round his soft neck, how graceful the inclined position of the head. I have no doubt that this statue represents Celestial Cupid, and Visconti believes it to be after Praxiteles.

‘We leave Celestial Eros with reluctance, and after passing some fine works we are rivetted to the spot by a beautiful statue of an Amazon. The lover of sculpture is here struck by the power of the Greek artist in blending severity of character and strength with the female form. The face is grave, and seems incapable of tender emotion—yet beautiful. The shoulders are somewhat broad, and the left breast, which is exposed, is small, not prominent. The arms and limbs are particularly fine. The tunic is a specimen of the dress which

the Amazons are supposed to have worn, and is in numerous crisp folds, giving breadth to the flesh. The style of this statue is worthy of the school of Phidias. The tunic is darker than the flesh, and Visconti believes that it was painted. Since the time of Visconti many fragments of statues have been found with colour on them.

‘Close to the Amazon are the figures of Menandro and Poseidippos, sitting in chairs. They are admirable specimens of portrait statues, true to nature in character and action.

‘Opposite the fragment of Celestial Cupid is a statue of a young Faun, resting with his bent arm on the trunk of a tree, holding his pipe in his hand. He has ceased to play, and there is mirth and good nature in his youthful face. Although a rustic he is full of beauty. The whole figure is in perfect ease, and the relaxed leg and foot are beautifully negligent, in keeping with his character. The longer we look at this admirable work the more we agree with Visconti that it is a copy from the celebrated Faun by Praxiteles; the repetitions of this figure are numerous, but this is the finest of them all. When several copies of the same work have been found it is reasonable to infer that the original must have been popular. There

are four or five repetitions" of the Venus of Praxiteles.

‘We here enter a small circular room, the architecture of which is very elegant and rich—the ceiling is painted, and the mosaic floor is antique. There are a few fine works here, but that which gives me particular pleasure is the statue of the crouching Venus—or, it may be, a nymph at the bath. This work is so fleshy and beautiful that I am inclined to think it an original; there are repetitions to be found elsewhere, but they are inferior to this. Among the vast number of ancient statues that have descended to us there are very few represented in a doubled-up or crouching attitude. Such positions are unfavourable to the display of long, graceful lines, nor are the proportions seen to advantage. The figure is here natural, but both the arms as well as the knees form angles, and cover the front of the body. Still we admire this great favourite.

‘Passing through the small circular room of the nine Muses, with their leader, Apollo Musigetes, we enter the great Rotunda, which contains large statues of high merit. On the right is a colossal statue of Jove, a sublime production, on which we may meditate. The Pagans represented the

Divinity under a human form—we see also God painted and sculptured in the Roman Catholic churches. This image of Jove, produced by a Greek artist, strikes us with the idea of the highest sublimity and beauty—beauty unfading. The expression is paternal and venerable, yet ever young. How rich are his ambrosial locks! Power, benevolence, majesty, and beauty are combined in this Greek work. The Christian artist's idea of God is not so lofty—they represent Him as an aged man, with a certain vigour and action, but time has diminished His strength and beauty; you feel that He is in the decline of age. He is a grand old man and nothing more. The Greek artists were enlightened by the philosophers—the gods personified by the sculptors were pure, passionless, and beautiful. The poets were not so elevated in their conceptions; they made them beautiful and mighty, but with human propensities and sensations. Aries roared aloud with pain, and Aphrodite suffered when wounded.

‘Our artistic ambition becomes often depressed in the contemplation of these wonderful works. In the art of sculpture the Greeks were gods. We, with all our efforts, find it hard toil to creep upwards after them. The eminence on which

they stand is beyond our reach. Still the sculptor, duly imbued with the principles of his art, struggles on, and feels delight in his labours—for the study of the beautiful is his profession.

‘In the Vatican we go from statue to statue, from fragment to fragment, like the bee from flower to flower. How enchanting is the Discobolus of Naucydes of Argos! The original does not exist, but the repetition in the circular room of the Biga is the best of those that remain. This beautiful work is admired for the natural action and the graceful play of all its movements, and for its broad style and fine proportions. He is in the act of indicating the distance before throwing his discus. In this composition neither of the arms cross the body. When the action represented permits the display of the front of the figure it is most favourable to beauty and grace. Such is the arrangement in the Apollo, and in most fine statues.

‘In the same room is the Discobolus of Myron, in the act of throwing his discus, mentioned by Greek writers. A man could not sustain such a position; it represents a momentary action, which the sculptor must have often seen, and is perfectly true to nature. The modern head of this repeti-

tion turns from the discus, but that in the Palazzo Massimi is the most valuable. The head there has remained entire, and turns back towards the discus.

‘In this room also is a statue of Bacchus—a very fine work—which shows in great perfection his double character, that is, the combination of the male and female form. A Greek writer says that when the god appeared among men he looked like a woman, when among women like a youth.

‘From the apartment of the Biga, turning to the right and passing through the iron gate, we find ourselves in a long gallery full of statues and fragments. Those who are capable of judging will soon perceive the master mind in a very mediocre performance. It is a basso-rilievo on the front of a sarcophagus to the left. It represents the destruction of Niobe and her children. Apollo and Diana are discharging their fatal arrows upon them, and Niobe is seen folding her youngest daughter to her lap and with her left hand raising her mantle to shield her. Even in the midst of all this scene of terror and wild despair, the dying and the dead—all her own children—her action is dignified. The action of

every figure is true to nature. The original must have been the production of a great master, and in the best period of art.

‘ Here is also another sarcophagus on which is sculptured in basso-rilievo a tragical event renowned in Greek myth. The subject is Orestes assisted by his friend Pylades, while punishing his mother Clytemnestra with death for the murder of his father Agamemnon. Orestes was commanded by the oracle to execute this unnatural act, and Pylades at the same time slew Egistheus the seducer of Clytemnestra. The obedience of Orestes to the oracle brought upon him instant retribution. The dreadful Furies pursued him and drove him to madness. At last he received mercy and was restored to peace. This basso-rilievo must also have been the conception of a great artist. There is an antique repetition of this same work in the wall of a house here—also one in the cortile of the Palazzo Giustiniani.

‘ As I take delight in bassi-rilievi we will now pay a visit to the Capitol and examine a sarcophagus on which is represented the battle of the Greeks and Amazons. The composition is full of animation and masterly grouping. The portion on the left was copied by Flaxman, who at his

lectures gave it as a specimen of the beautiful concatenation of arms and legs. In this respect too Flaxman was very clever, as we observe in his admirable compositions.

‘ Here also is a fine basso-rilievo of Endymion asleep whilst his faithful dog is on the watch. It is a first-rate work.

‘ We have in Rome hundreds of bassi-rilievi—but of inferior sculpture. The study of the reliefs of the Elgin marbles enables us now to distinguish the pure style of this class of art from the corrupt and degenerate. We have scarcely any specimens at Rome of the chaste flat manner of the Athenian school. Over one of the fireplaces at the Villa Albani, there is a very beautiful flat relief, representing Orpheus, Eurydice, and Mercury. A repetition of it is at Naples. There is a pure specimen at Grotta Ferrata—a beardless philosopher seated—in alto-rilievo, but at the same time flat, a most valuable specimen. It is also interesting as having been found at the spot where Cicero’s villa is supposed to have stood. I must not forget to name an alto-rilievo over another fireplace in the Villa Albani, of Antinous. It is perfectly beautiful, and I believe Winckelmann considered it equal to the Apollo for style. The

execution of the hair is perfect. Here is also a large alto-rilievo, figures nearly life size—a young hero on the ground defending himself, whilst the victor, on a horse, is giving him a blow with his sword. This work is pure Athenian.

‘Returning to works in the round, the Capitol contains a noble study for the artist—the statue called “The Dying Gladiator.” We perceive here an original work; not a repetition, and by a great master. But there is no name upon it. Common nature is here admirably modelled. The head is of a low type, with high cheek bones, short flat nose and a moustache. The Greeks represented the barbarians less beautiful than themselves. The action of this figure, while perfectly natural, is at the same time full of variety from the judicious arrangement of all its parts. It tells its own tale, and affects you at once. As you gaze upon him sympathy creeps over your senses. He bleeds—his life flows slowly away—silent and calm—he is sinking—will faint and die! I have heard some persons say that Greek art wants expression. They want perception. The natural and expressive touches the heart—keeps you upon earth—it is the ideal only that can elevate the soul; thus this statue has many more admirers than the Apollo

Belvedere, which proves that the most sublime and refined beauty does not so readily impress the general beholder. The Apollo is unearthly, and has only that degree of expression which angels deign to show. The anger of the god is so slight, you think it gone.

‘In the same room is a fine portrait statue of Zeno. The figure is a remarkable specimen of the imitation of common nature, and the drapery is very good. There is also a large bust here, greatly admired, which goes under the name of Ariadne, but it is, as Winckelmann says, Dionysos (Bacchus).

‘The statue called Flora is a fine example of drapery. In the next room we admire the statue of an Amazon. It is a repetition, the same as that in the Vatican. The original must have been a first-rate work. In this room there are two statues of Centaurs; small—in black marble: they are of high excellence, and were found in the villa of Hadrian. They are the works of Papia and Aristeia. Their names are inscribed in Greek.

‘Here is a group of a child playing with a swan—a repetition of it is in the Vatican. This little work is very clever in composition, and very natural. The plump little fellow has his arms tight

round the neck of the swan, pulling it back with all his might, while the bird is pushing itself forward. This gives contrary action, variety, and great animation to the whole. The struggle is great on both sides. Winckelmann thinks that this group is not by a great Greek artist because they would not condescend to copy infantine forms, which are nothing more than lumps of fat. The great sculptors of our own day rarely sculpture fat children. Statues of babies are subjects only for women to admire—which they always do.

‘In the next room we are struck with admiration of the seated figure of Agrippina, wife of Germanicus, and mother of Nero. Can we contemplate the noble representation of this lady without remembering her sufferings and tragical fate. Canova could not resist adopting the noble, natural, and graceful attitude of this figure in his portrait statue of Napoleon’s mother, which is in the collection of the Duke of Devonshire.

‘In this collection there is another Amazon; different from those already mentioned. This one is represented wounded under the right breast; with her left hand she presses part of her dress to the wound. How natural is the lifting of the right arm to enable her better to see the wound.

‘The collection of busts in the Capitol is very rich, and most interesting.’

‘The collection of sculpture in the Villa Ludovisi is small. The principal work there is a large group representing a barbarian chief in the act of killing himself, after having first put his wife to death, who is just breathing her last. He has still hold of her while she is sinking on her knees with her drooping head and closing eyes. She seems to have received death at the hands of her husband with resignation. This scene is supposed to take place on the field of battle—the hero is vanquished. This work has been called *Pætus* and *Arria*. I will venture to say that there is a fault in the composition of this group, namely in the manner of raising the hand in order to plunge the weapon into his throat. This action hides the face of the man from those who view the work in front. It is a law in this species of composition that the front view of a group shall be uninterrupted and not cut up by any crossing of parts. We know that groups in the round cannot be equally perfect in all views. The most difficult thing in our art is the composition of a group. The inexperienced sculptor attempts it more readily than one who has worked longer.

‘The next group we admire is that of a woman conversing with a youth younger than herself. The woman has her hair cropped short, a sign of mourning. On that account it is supposed to represent Electra and Orestes. The drapery is good, and the form of the youth in fine style.

‘The statue of a young man is also admired. He is seated, with his hands clasped over his bent knee, and with a sword. It is supposed to represent Mars. Cupid is crouched at his foot. The workmanship is fine, and the countenance noble.

‘The colossal head of Juno in Greek marble is highly admired for its divine beauty. The nose has never been injured, which is rare in an antique statue. This splendid work is a most valuable study. There are many other statues of great interest in the Ludovisi collection. Also a group by a modern sculptor, life size, representing Pluto carrying off Proserpine. It is the work of Bernini. To see this group, which is a good specimen of this master, by the side of the pure Greek works, is valuable to the artist. It is like seeing vice and virtue in juxtaposition.’

CHAPTER IX.

Illness and Death of Mr. Benjamin Gibson—Death of Mrs. Sandbach.

WE must now advert to that gentle and learned man Mr. Benjamin Gibson, called by his brother 'my classical dictionary.' He had joined our sculptor in Rome, and lived with him about fourteen years. The brothers were deeply attached to each other, and had many points of character in common—the same serenity of mind, the same one-sidedness and simplicity. Benjamin was of great use to John in solving classical questions, and was an archæologist of no mean order; he also modelled; but he was far less robust than his brother, and in 1847 the declining state of his health began to form an occasional topic in Gibson's letters. The first mention is humorously characteristic of both men. It is to Mrs. Sandbach. 'Rome, March 6, 1847. The basso-rilievo of the Hours' (for Lord Fitzwilliam) 'has so absorbed all my soul and body that I have been as if shut up from the world, and from all that belongs to it.

Still, mortality must come and interrupt me, and disturb my happy dreams. I, who have no wife nor child, nor dog nor cat to draw my thoughts away from my art, have my brother, Mr. Ben, to trouble me. He has been ill for weeks, got a bad cold, and would take no remedy, have no doctor. Nothing would he do. In the meantime a large swelling came on his right side, external; so I pounced upon him with Dr. Pantaleoni, who has much practice here with the English. . . .

‘My present work, the model of the Hours, will be finished in three weeks. I have never done a work which has given me more pleasure than this. The learned and the unlearned seem struck with it. Wyatt says it is full of go. I work at it with delight, except my fits of trouble about Mr. Ben. “You see,” I said to him, “the consequence of rejecting all medical aid.” “Pago la pena,” he replied. I consider Mr. Ben as one of the most amiable of human beings—too good for this world, but he will take no care against colds, and when ill he is a stubborn animal. However now he does everything Pantaleoni orders.’

Later in the same summer Gibson expresses as much anxiety as was his wont to express about anything not of marble—his brother's state was

more critical; nevertheless he adds, 'Mr. Ben is writing his article upon the tomb found by Sir Charles Fellowes in Lycia, and seems wonderfully unconcerned about himself.' In November 1847, on Gibson's return from England, he found him better, but careless as before about cold. 'I will not allow Mr. Ben to go to these cold galleries—it is then he coughs—he would go directly if I were not on the watch.' It was like one child watching another and expressing its sentiments with most unsensational coolness of speech, though ever acting with infinite tenderness. 'Mr. Ben is better—comes to the studio, and will work—he suffers night and day, but bears it with tranquillity. I still fear that this is the illness that will carry him off, but I think when his death comes he will go calmly and quite reconciled. When he does go he will have left a bad world.' Then on Feb. 22, 1849, he writes from Civita Vecchia, 'The doctor is the cause of my coming here, to see if the sea air will save Mr. Ben, who is very bad, consuming away every day. For many months we thought he would get well, but this has been lately a very cold season, and it is the keen air has re-attacked him. We have only been here two days, and it is warm and delightful. He

may recover, but still I fear his days are few—when speaking he stops at every word—so little force left.’

When Gibson ran away from Rome to Leghorn in June 1849, Mr. Ben was still at Civita Vecchia. There his malady assumed a distressing form, of which Gibson gives a diagnosis in a letter to his friend Miss Parkes, June 19, 1849. ‘He was more than two months at Civita Vecchia for the sea air, which did him good—but a swelling came over the lower rib—at his waist—rather in front, of a dark purple colour, and so painful, night and day. At last he could no longer walk—worse and worse—and more reduced than ever. So, from Leghorn I sailed to Civita Vecchia and brought him away—that is to Leghorn. And an hour after our arrival I fetched an English doctor, who operated immediately and attended afterwards. As Mr. Ben could not walk I drove him out every evening in an open carriage along the sea-side. He improved, but the heat became very great, and began to make me ill too. So we left Leghorn, and here we are at the Bagni di Lucca, and Mr. Ben is getting vastly better and stronger. For months he has not been able to dress or undress himself, so I engaged a servant man at

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Rome to attend him, and this man is with us here—and he is excellent; so quiet and attentive.

‘My landlady at Rome said to me one day that she never knew such a being as “Signor Beniamino;” during the two years that he has been suffering he has never uttered one word of complaint.’

This good man died in August 1851, at the Baths of Lucca—during Gibson’s absence in England. He tripped over a stone in walking, fell on his head, and died immediately. Gibson felt the loss in his simple way deeply. ‘When alone and in bed I think of nothing but of poor Ben. How am I to conquer mortal feelings?’

Gibson raised a simple monument to his brother, with an epitaph which had no exaggeration. ‘*He resided fourteen years at Rome, where his learning, amiability, and virtue made him beloved and revered.*’ And he proposed to add as an appropriate text, ‘*I thank my God upon every remembrance of thee.*’ But in the Italy of that time, as in Rome still now, no stone marking the grave of a Protestant could bear an inscription without the permission of the Censor. And it is worthy of remark that this text was interdicted. Gibson says, ‘I knew that no passage expressive of salva-

tion would be allowed, but now they have become more rigorous and will not permit any passage at all from Scripture to be put upon the tombs of Protestants.' It was a strange retaliation by which those who have been most anxious to present the Holy Scriptures to Italy were denied the smallest quotation from it on their own tombs!

Meanwhile another bereavement was preparing for Gibson. Mrs. Sandbach was struggling with one of the most painful ills to which flesh is heir. Hopes and fears alternate in his letters to her—hope predominating—for his mind readily threw off what was uncongenial. In one of his last letters to her—March 1852—is this passage: 'I shall be very anxious to hear how you get on. Oh! do not join the angels yet—we shall weep bitter tears whenever you do join them. How wrong of us! How difficult to conquer our nature!' On June 1st he started for England, but he did not see the sweet lady again. She joined 'the glorious company' on the 23rd of June.

To those who doubted whether Gibson had deep feelings the following pathetic extract may be convincing. It is addressed to Miss Lloyd, a mutual friend of Mrs. Sandbach and himself. 'Eartham,

20th August, 1852. . . The moment I arrived in London, I wrote to Mr. Sandbach to say that I was ready to start for Hafodunos—that I waited to hear from him. When he mentioned me to her she said, “It is too late; give my dear love to him—I hope we shall meet in heaven.” She died that same night at two o’clock—in her sleep—never awoke.

‘After she was buried Mr. Sandbach wished me to go there to him, but I could not rouse myself to go to the dwelling of the departed One—to sit in her room—every room of hers a desert—every chair empty of her dear self—the flower garden without her—the trees under which we so often sat casting their shade over her empty seat. No, I could not go there, nor can I escape the gloomy, heavy desolation which hangs over me, follows me like my shadow wherever I go.’

CHAPTER X.

Prospects of high-class Sculpture in England—A Roman Education—Proceedings at Academy of St. Luke—Group of the Queen—Statue of Venus—Gibson as Pygmalion—Colour—Statue of Pandora—of Bacchus—Portrait Statue Coloured—Exhibition of 1862—Memorial to Prince Consort.

AS one object of Gibson's autobiographical notes was to plead the necessity for a different mode of study as regards English students of sculpture, we feel it right, as we have said before, to give the impressions which the public monuments in London made upon him after his long residence in Rome.

'The prospect of advancing sculpture of a high class in England seems to me to be far distant. If I saw a young sculptor of ardent ambition I should tell him from my experience what would be necessary to become great in the higher walks of the art—namely a Roman education for several years, under the tuition of a great master. At the age of thirty he ought to be prepared by his acquired knowledge and practice to begin a work for posterity. The greatest sculptors of this age have studied at Rome. The Governments of all

the chief countries of Europe, excepting that of England, send pensioned students to Rome,* and that is why the style of the public monuments in my own country is generally so feeble. The English Government spends large sums to erect public monuments, but contributes nothing towards the training of the student. . .

‘During my visits to England I have acquired a knowledge of the state of sculpture there, and of the manner in which the commissions for public monuments are conducted; and I feel myself justified in expressing my sentiments freely, however presumptuous and ungracious they may be considered by some. If I can direct attention to a most fatal impediment to the advancement of the art of sculpture in our country I ought to do so boldly.

‘Speaking from an experience of forty years’ study and practice at Rome, where I had also the advantage of intercourse with the greatest artists and most enlightened connoisseurs, I have come to the conviction that one great evil as regards the art in England arises from the class of committee to which the decision in such matters is

* Gibson appends the following list of those who send, or did send, pensioned students to Rome: France, Austria, Prussia, Saxony, Russia, Tuscany, Naples, Carrara, Spain, Mexico, Denmark, Sweden, Belgium.

entrusted. These committees are composed of miscellaneous individuals, united only in the common qualification of having no knowledge of or connexion with the art beyond that which most educated individuals possess. In the course of my life, however, I have never known anyone who has not been professionally engaged in the study of art capable of judging of grandeur of style, of composition, of harmony of lines, and of the intricacies of drapery. Yet the judges appointed to decide upon the models submitted for the Wellington monument had, on that important occasion, not a single sculptor among them. At the same time not one of the celebrated sculptors of Europe sent models there.

‘At the Academy of St. Luke (in Rome) the system of competition for public monuments is condemned. It is known that the greatest sculptors will not compete, and for two reasons—firstly because they are much employed, and secondly because they will not enter into competition with young men unknown to fame. Competition is calculated to bring forth only mediocrity.

‘I take this occasion to mention the mode of proceeding at the Academy of St. Luke when the members are required to pronounce judgment on the specimens of sculpture and painting offered for

the prizes. All the academicians—painters as well as sculptors—assemble and examine the models. When it is time to decide which specimen of modelling is entitled to the prize, the secretary rings his little bell, and all the painters retire, leaving the sculptors to make up their minds alone; for the latter do not consider that painters are competent to assist them. When the turn of the painters come, they in like manner exclude the sculptors—each is judged by his own profession.

‘From my long experience of the Academy of St. Luke, my conviction is that they discharge their respective duties with ability and fairness, being always tenacious of the honour of the body. Frequently designs from the Roman provinces are sent here for judgment, and I have never heard any dissatisfaction expressed. The members are composed principally of Italians, with a few Frenchmen and Germans, and one Englishman—that is myself. At present Tenerani is the president; he was a pupil of Thorwaldsen. I consider him one of the first sculptors now in Europe. His style is pure and beautiful, but the works which will consign his name to posterity are chiefly of a religious character. He has also executed a few classical subjects which are worthy of the highest

commendation, while his portrait statues are of first-rate excellence.' . . .

'I will now return to my own works. In 1850 I was informed that it was intended to erect a statue of Her Majesty within the Houses of Parliament—to be placed in a recess in the Prince's Chamber. I was told at the same time that it was desired that I should turn my thoughts to the treatment of the subject. The original scheme was for a single statue, but Prince Albert, on inspecting the recess intended for it, pronounced it to be too wide for a single figure. He was right. His Royal Highness therefore, in the character of President of the Commission for the decoration of the Houses of Parliament, proposed that two allegorical figures should be added, so as to form an important group. I accordingly sent a design from Rome representing Her Majesty seated upon her throne, with her sceptre in her left hand, and a laurel crown—the emblem of the reward of merit—in her right. On her right hand the figure of Wisdom, on her left that of Justice. These figures stand a little below the throne, giving a pyramidal form to the group. Certain geometrical forms are necessary in composition. After this design had been considered,

his Royal Highness suggested that, the Sovereign being a lady, the figure of Wisdom might be exchanged for that of Clemency. I was pleased with this correction, and so were others who were entitled to give an opinion. Considering the importance of the work it was necessary that I should come to England to confer face to face with the architect on the size of the statues and on other points. On arriving in London Sir Charles Barry assigned me a small room in the great building to make my sketch-model, which I completed in a month. Prince Albert watched my progress in the work, coming occasionally with members of the Government, and pointing out to them what he considered its merits. This model was adopted by the Commission, and I was authorised to execute the work. No limit as to time was assigned me—a condition to which I had always felt the greatest objection—and I completed the monument in five years. It stands in the Prince's Chamber, where it receives a fine light, which is of the first importance for sculpture. Sir Charles Barry had proportioned the figures well to the size of the room—the large dimensions have an imposing effect, and I am happy that my work is so well seen.

‘ I now venture to make a few remarks on this work, even at the risk of their subjecting me to the charge of vanity. I think that the monument of the Queen in the Parliament House is worthy the consideration of all home-bred English sculptors. It is a specimen from the Roman school, that great college to which, as I have said, all European Governments, England excepted, send pensioned students. In this group I have aimed at the highest style of monumental art—severe simplicity, rich and broad drapery, and correctness of outline throughout the whole. I was requested to write a description of the group for visitors to read when surveying the monument. I wrote the following.

“ In the Prince's Chamber is represented in marble her most gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, sitting upon her throne, holding her sceptre and a laurel crown—that is, governing and rewarding. The back of the throne is surmounted by lions, expressive of British strength and courage, and the footstool is adorned by sea-horses, to signify dominion upon the ocean. The horse is an emblem of war. On the right of the Sovereign stands Justice; on the left Clemency. Justice holds the sword and balance—round her neck is

suspended the image of Truth. In Egypt the judge, when pronouncing the sentence of death, put on his neck a small golden image of Truth. The expression of Justice is inflexible,* while that of Clemency is full of sympathy and sadness—sad for the constant sins that come to her knowledge, while with lenity she keeps the sword sheathed and offers the olive-branch, the sign of peace. On the front of the pedestal is a bas-relief of Commerce. On the right side is Science designated by a youth pondering over geometry. On the left a figure denoting the useful arts. In the background are represented the steam-engine, the telegraph-wire, and other objects. The figures are colossal; that of Her Majesty being eight feet high—the two supporting figures are above seven.” . . .

‘ After Rome had subsided into quiet under the presence of French troops, Mr. Joseph Neeld came to Rome and frequently visited my studio. At last he expressed a wish to have a statue by my hand. The subject he chose was a Venus—to be represented nude, but with some drapery modestly arranged, without sacrificing too much of the form. After Mr. Neeld’s departure this subject began to

* He told a friend that a woman who sold fruit in the market, opposite the Pantheon, served him as a model for his Justice.

occupy my thoughts by day and by night, as all the works I have executed have done. I chose a standing position, as most favourable for the figure, and for the display of long, flowing lines. As to the action I had often remarked that ladies when holding a fan or any light object generally place their hands in repose in front of the person. Thus I made my Venus stand, with the golden apple, which she holds quietly in her left hand. From her left arm hangs her garment reaching to the ground, but this is not merely a piece of drapery, it is the tunic-mantle (*Chitonophoros*) worn by the Greek ladies, which I cut out for the purpose. It is so arranged as to cover modestly the figure, not placed as if purposely to conceal, but falling accidentally.

‘ Before this statue left my studio, a gentleman came to Rome—Mr. Preston of Liverpool—with his young wife. They desired to have a repetition of the Goddess of Love and Beauty. This repetition I kept in hand for five years, working on the marble whenever I felt disposed, and referring often to nature. Thus it became, I may say, the most carefully laboured work I ever executed, for I wrought the forms up to the highest standard of the ideal. As I laboured on, ever panting for

perfection, I fixed so many degrees of the circle for the curves and forms, and the fewer the degrees, the more refined and soft the undulating lines became. The following passage from Winckelmann was always in my mind. "The forms of a beautiful body are determined by lines the centre of which is constantly changing, and which, if continued, would never describe circles. They are consequently more simple, but also more complex than a circle which, however large or small it may be, always has the same centre, and either includes others or is included in others. This diversity was sought after by the Greeks in works of all kinds, and their discernment of its beauty led them to introduce the same system even into the forms of their utensils and vases, the easy and elegant outline of which is drawn after the same rule, that is by a line the centre of which must be found by means of several circles. Thus all these works have an elliptical figure, and therein consists their beauty. The greater unity there is in the junction of the forms and in the flowing of one out of another, the greater is the beauty of the whole."

'The expression I endeavoured to give my Venus was that spiritual elevation of character

which results from purity and sweetness, combined with an air of unaffected dignity and grace. When this *replica* for Mr. Preston was finished I took the liberty to decorate it in a fashion unprecedented in modern times. I tinted the flesh like warm ivory—scarcely red—the eyes blue, the hair blond, and the net which contains the hair golden. “And her fair locks were woven up in gold,” Spenser. The blue fillets encircling the head are edged with gold, and she has gold earrings. Her armlet is also of gold, and the apple in her hand, which has a Greek inscription on it “To the most beautiful.” The drapery is left the white colour of the marble—the border ornament is pink and blue. At her feet is a tortoise, on the back of which is inscribed in Greek “Gibson made me at Rome.” When all my labour was complete I often sat down quietly and alone before my work, meditating upon it and consulting my own simple feelings. I endeavoured to keep myself free from self-delusion as to the effect of the colouring. I said to myself “Here is a little nearer approach to life—it is therefore more impressive—yes—yes indeed she seems an ethereal being with her blue eyes fixed upon me!” At moments I forgot that I was gazing at my own

production ; there I sat before her, long and often. How was I ever to part with her !

‘ I am convinced that the Greek taste was right in colouring their sculpture. The warm glow is agreeable to the eye, and so is the variety obtained by it. The flesh is of one tone, the hair of another ; the colouring of the eyes gives animation, and the ornaments on the drapery are distinctly seen. All these are great advantages. The moderns, being less refined than the Greeks in matters of art, are from long and stupid custom reconciled to the white statue. The flesh is white, the hair is white, the eyes are white, and the drapery white—this monotonous cold object is out of harmony with everything that surrounds it. It is not necessary that I should here give quotations from classical authors alluding to the polychromatic practice. All these are published and well known—as also the fact that fragments of fine Greek art have been found with traces of colour. Those who think that the Greeks did not colour sculpture in their high period of art are grossly mistaken. The Greek public were accustomed to see sculpture in gold and ivory, with the eyes of coloured glass, and of precious stones. A cold white statue would therefore have appeared incomplete to that people.

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But setting aside Greek authorities I can say that the effect of colour delicately applied, and with judgment, charms me. All the sculptors in Rome and the painters too, including Cornelius, agreed with me—also Visconti—but the sculptors said, “We dare not follow your example, lest we might not sell our works.” I replied, “I will fight it out, and go on.”

‘I retained the Venus in my studio for four years after she was completed—a proceeding on my part which put Mrs. Preston’s patience to a severe trial. I received several angry letters from that amiable lady. At last she asked me, point blank, whether I did not think I was using her very ill. I immediately confessed my sin and replied, “There is no doubt that I am using you abominably ill—yes—but the truth is I cannot screw up my courage to send away my Goddess. It is almost as difficult for me to part with her as it would be for Mr. Preston to part with you.” I then copied her out some verses upon the Venus written by the Rev. E. S.,* hoping that they would keep her quiet for some time. However, all this

* Oh, pure Ideal of the perfect grace
That is in woman, such a form as thine
In glorious Hellas did young fancy trace,
Till beauties more than human seemed divine.

made very little impression on the lady, and at last I was obliged to send her the statue.

‘I will now continue my artistic proceedings. In the winter of 1855 the Duke of Wellington and his amiable Duchess visited the Eternal City, and often came to my studio in the Via Fontanella. The Duke expressed a wish to have my Venus, but she was not to be disposed of. Then he intimated his desire that I should execute for him some coloured statue, and proposed the subject of Pandora. His desire was that I should represent her at the moment when she starts into life—her dawning consciousness of existence—nude, with

In such a form, seeking her destined home
On high Olympus, from the azure wave
Rose Aphrodite, daughter of the foam,
The hearts of gods and mortals to enslave.

In such a form, to win the glittering prize
By Discord's hand amid the fairest thrown,
Unveiled before the Trojan's dazzled eyes
She claimed the palm of beauty for her own.

Oh, wondrous might of genius to inspire
The lifeless marble with a living ray,
Flashed from the source of its own genial fire,
Which lights the poet's heart with endless day.

Oh touch of art ennobling ! who can gaze
Upon that matchless form, that modest mien,
Nor feel the power his inmost thoughts to raise,
Nor learn to reverence purity serene.

some drapery hanging from her arm. I expressed my apprehension that, so treated, the subject would not be sufficiently intelligible. "Let a box be placed at her feet," said the Duke, "and let her hands be open in an attitude of surprise at the discovery of her new existence." At once I saw that his Grace had imbibed an erroneous impression respecting the best mode of treatment. I said to him in answer that I would model a Pandora.

'Although the myth of Pandora is so well known, I will recapitulate the story, as it will show us what is necessary in treating the subject :

'By Jove's desire arose the bashful maid,
The cestus Pallas clasped, the robe arranged
Adored Persuasion, and the Graces round
Her tapered limbs with golden jewels hung.
Round her fair brow the lovely-tressed Hours
A garland twined of spring's purpureal flowers.
The whole attire Minerva's graceful art
Disposed, adjusted, formed to every part.'—*Hesiod.*

'It is evident that the best moment of time to represent Pandora is when she is thus attired by the blue-eyed goddess, assisted by the Graces, and by reverent Persuasion, and crowned with flowers by the lovely Hours. Thus I have endeavoured

to represent her, with the fatal box in her hand—drooping her head in deep thought, her eyes turned away from the box, while her hand is ready to raise the lid. The figure is motionless, but her mind is in full activity, labouring under the harassing feelings of intense curiosity, fear, and perplexity. Her thoughts have dwelled too long on what she bears. The box is still unopened, but Pandora is already lost. We are the sufferers—but Hope did not escape with the evil brood—she stayed behind, and remains to the last with us. . . .

‘As the heat of Rome was increasing I left for England, taking with me three photographs of my Pandora. On arriving in London I waited on the Duke of Wellington and submitted them to him. He expressed his conviction of the truth of what had been reported to him by friends in Rome, namely that I had produced a beautiful figure; “but,” said he, “Mr. Gibson, you have not followed my idea.” “No,” I replied, “I have followed *my own*.” “You are very stubborn,” he remarked. “Duke,” returned I, “I am a Welshman, and all the world knows that we are a stubborn race!”

‘Before I left London I received a letter from his Grace, expressing with great courtesy his dis-

appointment at my not treating the subject according to his view, and asking, if, it did not inconvenience me, to be allowed to decline it. This gave me no inconvenience, for Lady Marian Alford, a lady of true knowledge in the arts, and who had watched the progress of the statue with much interest at Rome, had requested, in case the Duke should not be satisfied, to become its possessor. Lady Marian had become converted to polychromy, and I therefore coloured the Pandora.

‘In the year 1856 the Marquis of Londonderry came to Rome with his lady, and often visited my studio. His Lordship was one of the many who did not approve of my new system of colouring my statues. Still, he was desirous of possessing a statue by me. He therefore proposed that the subject should be some youthful male beauty of the first class—a god—Bacchus. “That will do, by Jove!” said I. “Yes, I will undertake this subject with delight—but it is improper to represent him according to the vulgar idea, in a state of inebriation.” Accordingly, I have given Dionysos, the son of Jove, standing, with godlike dignity and youthful grace—his sceptre (the Thyrsis) in his left hand, and in his right the cup of wine. The god is not going to drink, but he is bestowing

the gift of the juice of the grape. His head is richly adorned with ivy, and as he is the "lover of flowers" there are flowers mixed in his wreath; a fillet is entwined round his brow, and falls with his locks on each side of the neck. "The golden-haired Dionysos."

'The expression of his godlike countenance is that of tranquillity and sweetness; the upper and lower eyelids are a little swelled, which gives softness and a slight touch of dreamy voluptuousness to his rather feminine countenance, whilst his lips are slightly apart, "as if a word were hovering there." His form is purely abstract, therefore refined to the utmost.

'Besides the male models I employed a female one too, so as to enter thoroughly into the spirit of the Greek idea, that Apollo, Dionysos, and Eros are androgynous. I have introduced a lyre at his feet. "The Muse leader," "The dance rouser." For giving a lyre to Bacchus I was called to account by three English gentlemen of high education, who maintained that there were no statues of that god represented with that instrument. I confessed that I had never seen such a thing, but for all that I had my authority, for Calistratus describes a bronze figure of Bacchus by Praxiteles

with a lyre—and that bronze was coloured. People may say truly that we have done with the gods of the Pantheon, and that these subjects no longer interest us or touch our feelings; but I say that we sculptors have still to do with these marble deities, for they teach us all that is beautiful and sublime in our art. Those people who object are influenced by their religious feelings, and take no pleasure in high art, but it is beauty and perfection of the human form that the sculptor labours for.

‘After Lord Londonderry had given me the commission for the statue of Bacchus, he came to my studio and took leave of me—and as he was leaving he turned and said, “Now don’t you go and paint my statue.” I made no reply.

‘The following winter, when modelling the Bacchus, Lord and Lady Portarlington were in Rome. At a large evening party I saw Lady Portarlington and went up and made my bow to her. She said, “Is it true that you have told some persons that you intend to paint my brother’s statue of Bacchus?” “Yes,” said I, immediately, “it is true.” “But my brother told you not to paint it.” “He did so,” I replied, “but I am determined to colour it.” Her ladyship appeared displeased, and said no more.

Gibson had also the opportunity of applying his theory of colour to a portrait statue—that of the Hon. Mrs. Murray, afterwards Countess of Beauchamp. Of this lady, when in Rome, he modelled a full length figure with a soft shawl arranged low round the skirt of the figure, giving beautiful drapery. This work was executed for Lady Beauchamp's mother the Baroness Bray, one of Gibson's kind friends. Hearing of the admiration his coloured Venus excited in Rome, Lady Beauchamp, on his coming to England, authorised him to tint the statue of herself. After this irrevocable step had been taken the Countess took alarm in consequence of some adverse dinner-party criticism, and summoned Gibson to the rescue, who endeavoured to infuse his own pugnacious indifference into her mind. “Do as I do, Lady Beauchamp—fight it out with them—what does it matter whether they like it or not?” I then requested some friends of my own to see the statue, then at Lady Bray's house in Great Stanhope Street—including Sir Charles and Lady Eastlake, Mrs. Jameson, Mr. Cockerell and others—Lady Beauchamp herself being present. The impression it made on them reassured her ladyship. I was told that Mr. Cockerell afterwards

spoke with approbation of the effect of my statue at a meeting of artists.'

It was in the Great Exhibition of 1862 that the world had an opportunity of inspecting Gibson's new heresy. In a light, quadrangular temple, constructed with the utmost judgment and taste by Mr. Owen Jones, three of his tinted statues—the Venus belonging to Mrs. Preston, the Pandora to Lady Marian Alford, and the Cupid to Mr. Holford—were seen to the utmost advantage; the fourth place being occupied by Miss Hosmer's Zenobia, a finely draped figure guiltless of any stain. This was truly, as Gibson expressed himself, 'A bone for the scribblers to pick.' And not for the scribblers only, but for the talkers too. And those perhaps talked most who knew least. For every young lady at dinner-table or in ball-room in that London season of 1862 felt herself called upon to tell her partner what she thought of 'Gibson's coloured Venus,' while the facility with which judgment was pronounced on these occasions was almost enviable to those who had greater difficulty or diffidence in delivering an opinion. In truth the question lay totally beyond the English public, who at best have scarcely advanced, even as regards pictorial art, beyond the

lowest step of the æsthetic ladder,—the estimate of a subject. But here the subjects offered nothing to amuse the eye or touch the fancy. Grace, dignity, beauty, truth, and difficulties innumerable overcome, were, it is true, to be discovered here—but what were they to an uneducated multitude who infinitely preferred, as in Monti's veiled heads, to see difficulties evaded altogether.* It may be safely asserted that, but for the novelty and catch-word of the colour, these exquisite works of art would have been passed over with utter indifference by nine-tenths of those who crowded to stare at them. At the same time there is no doubt that among those who hung silently and long over the rail which protected the temple from the pressure of the multitude, there were a few who imbibed new and elevating impressions of which they could perhaps give little account to themselves, and still less to others.

Gibson deeply felt the death of the great and good Prince Consort—for whom he had personally the highest admiration and respect. At the time when the design for a memorial in Hyde Park

* No depreciation of Signor Monti's powers is here intended. No one set a juster value on his veiled figures than this gifted artist himself.

gave Her Majesty much anxiety, he was applied to for his opinion. I am permitted to copy his answer to General the Hon. Charles Grey.

‘Rome, February 19, 1862.

‘Dear Sir—I have the pleasure to acknowledge the honor of your kind letter, which I have read with deep interest.

‘I fear you have too much confidence in my judgment; however, I willingly do my humble duty and express what I feel on the important subject.

‘Then, with due submission, I confess I do not consider the appropriation of an Egyptian obelisk to the memory of the Prince the best thing to do. The obelisk did well with Egyptian temples; one harmonized with the other; but surrounding its base with our sculpture groups is out of harmony—inconsistent mixture! Would the Greeks with their genius and taste for beauty have erected at Athens an Egyptian obelisk in honor of any of their great men? Let us imitate the Greeks.

‘Now would not some architectural display, classical and pure, be more in harmony with the good and correct taste of the departed One? A classical mausoleum would be an object of beauty,

and much more calculated to draw the admiration of the multitude. Behold the graceful monument towering high upon many steps, surrounded by Ionic columns—you enter, and you behold the statue of the Prince sitting in repose and meditation, with a book in his hand. In the niches which surround you are allegorical statues—emblems of the Prince's virtues, and of his intellectual powers. There are those who advocate the exclusion of allegory from this art, that is they wish to do away with the language of sculpture. I have had a proof that the Prince knew better than those men.

‘ The opinion of two or three of the first-rate architects would be the most valuable ; men of practice and knowledge in their profession. Sir Charles Eastlake, though not an architect, is a man of knowledge and good taste ; there are many who sit in judgment without real judgment—these are the most numerous.

‘ The statues ought to be in one style, classical and pure, to be in harmony with the whole ; the sculptors carefully chosen. There should be made a model of the best design, so as to enable the Queen to have a more clear idea of the effect.

‘A responsibility has fallen upon Her Majesty. She has the power of naming her choice, and she has a feeling for the beautiful.

‘I have the honor to be, dear sir,

‘Your obedient servant,

‘JOHN GIBSON.’

Subsequently, when the present design for the memorial had been chosen, and the groups for sculpture determined upon, Her Majesty wished that Gibson should undertake the group of Europe—but he felt that ‘after having been forty-six years roasted in Rome’ he could not venture to undertake a work which would require him to spend the winter in England. He offered afterwards to make the model in Rome and send it to be executed in England, but by that time the group had been given over to another sculptor.

CHAPTER XI.

Gibson's Pupil, Miss Hosmer—His Railway and other Adventures—Analysis of his Art—His wonderfully executed Drawings—Summary of his Character—Illness—Death—Will in favour of Royal Academy.

WE may now allude to the only pupil Gibson ever professed to teach, and in whom he may justly be said to have raised a living monument to himself. Miss Harriet Hosmer, whose name is widely known on two continents, was the only surviving child of a physician at Boston. Her mother, who died before her child could remember her, had a great love of art—her father was fertile in mechanical resources, and a man of great wit and humour. The young lady managed to inherit the best gifts of both parents. At an early age she resolved to devote her life to the profession of a sculptor, and showed a determination of character not likely to be diverted from any intelligent purpose she might form. As a child she was of delicate health, and was therefore kept much in the open air, where she would lie on her face by the river side and fashion her plastic

ideas in mud. Later, she studied anatomy for half a year at St. Louis—modelled, cast, and also cut some marble busts entirely herself. Mr. Greenough, the American sculptor, who had resided at Florence, on being consulted as to who was the sculptor fittest to instruct her, instantly named Gibson. Her father consented, remarking ‘The best is good enough for you.’

Accordingly the father and daughter made their way to Europe, to Rome, and to Gibson’s studio. Frequently have we heard Gibson relate the tale of his first visit from the strange, monosyllabic American girl, ‘Young Miss,’ as he called her, to whom he set an experimental task to test her modelling powers. Her obvious ability and firmness of purpose broke down all his objections to receiving her as a pupil, which he ultimately did for no other consideration than that of the interest her talent and character inspired in him. As Canova had generously done for him, thirty-six years before, so did he for her—teaching her all he knew himself; while she on her part unconsciously repeated at the outset of her apprenticeship the trait which Gibson has related of himself at the same period. For he told her, as Canova had told him, to make the most of a few days in seeing

the sights of Rome before entering his studio. 'I shall come to-morrow,' was the laconic reply, and so she did. And it is interesting to have the pupil's account too. 'The first morning I entered Mr. Gibson's studio (as a pupil) was the beginning of the year 1853—he was working upon the knee of his Wounded Amazon—finishing it in marble. He laid down his chisel (how well I can see him now!) and received me most kindly—showed me all the statues in his studio, and then said "Now I will show you the room where you are to work—a little room, but as big as you are yourself." He always poked fun at me about my size. He impressed me as being very kind, but his peculiar curt manner rather filled me with awe. I did not at first discover that he dearly loved a little nonsense, and I was extremely demure and solemn with him—but that solemnity did not last long, and I never talked more nonsense with anyone than with the grave, staid Master. Apropos of the knee of the Amazon, I always told him I was more fond of that statue than of any other, from its being connected with my first impression of him. He said I always looked sentimental when I saw it.

'I never saw him so well pleased with a bit of

silliness as once when I wrote upon a bust in his studio which Miss Lloyd was copying in clay,

"No progress. J. G."

He discovered it after I had left the room, and remained till Miss Lloyd came in purposely to see the effect. I know he never forgot it.

'As to his mode of teaching me he said he could best apply rules as he worked, and often he has made me sit by him by the hour together as he modelled. He was very funny sometimes in his criticisms. I remember asking him to come and see the sketch of Zenobia which I was then preparing. He looked at it for some time in silence, and I began to flatter myself that I should have some praise, but the only remark he deigned to make was, "Yes—there is such a thing as equilibrium." "But," said I, "this is only to see how the drapery comes in." "Under all circumstances," says he, "there is such a thing as equilibrium—yes—I will leave you to your troubles."'

Never was generous master more gratefully repaid—never was there a more interesting relation between teacher and scholar—or, it may be added, between man and woman. In certain respects the characters of each were identical—namely in love

of truth, and in devotion to their common occupation. Otherwise two persons could scarcely be found less alike, or who more keenly relished each other's idiosyncracies. To the shrewd, racy, Transatlantic young lady the serene simplicity and guilelessness of the sculptor were matters as much of the keenest mirth as of the profoundest respect—while her ever playful wit and independent, original ways were a new zest in a life which Time had begun to rob of its earlier companions and interests. In matters of art Gibson found in her the most tractable of scholars—in matters of life and action, the devotion of a daughter, mingled with the shrewd sense of one who knew intuitively what he could never learn. Meanwhile the Gibsoniana of his innocent mistakes and foibles, as given by her lively tongue, will never be forgotten by those who have listened to them; all tempered as they now are by the pathos investing one who is heard no more. Had Miss Hosmer's avocations permitted it no one would have ventured to compete with her in editing the story of his life, and in defining the beauty of his character and of his art.

No one needed such bright and helpful companionship more than Gibson. In his own studio

he could take very tolerable care of himself, but out of it he was not fit to go a day's journey alone. Miss Hosmer's definition of him, which he enjoyed as much as any who heard it, was frequently applicable. 'He is a god in his studio, but God help him when he is out of it.' Gibson had in some measure acquired the art of 'vettura' travelling, but the mysteries and irrevocable precisions of the railway were too much for him. It was easy to start him in the right train and with a right ticket in his hand, but he had an unfortunate knack of getting out either too soon or too late for his particular destination. The story of one journey used to be in great request with his friends, and more especially that part where, having, as he thought, safely accomplished the transit, he desired a porter to show him the way to the cathedral. 'But the scoundrel would have it that there was no cathedral in the place, and at last had the impudence to ask me if I knew where I was! Then I discovered that instead of being in Chichester, where I had a particular appointment with the Dean and Chapter, I was safe in Portsmouth, where there was no cathedral at all—no—none at all.'

Another story of a vain attempt to reach Wentworth, the seat of Earl Fitzwilliam, was equally

in request with his hearers, and has been thus alluded to by himself in his biographical notes. 'It was from the residence of Mr. Cheney, of Badger Hall in Shropshire (how he got there he does not say) that I proceeded to Wentworth. The train soon stopped at a small station, and seeing some people get out, I also descended, when, in a moment, the train moved on—faster and faster—and left me standing on the platform. I walked a few paces backwards and forwards in disagreeable meditation. "I wish to heaven," thought I to myself, "that I was on my way back to Rome with a vetturino!" Then I observed a policeman darting his eyes upon me, as if he would look me through. Said I to the fellow, "Where is that cursed train gone to? It's off with my luggage, and here am I!" The man asked me the name of the place where I took my ticket. "I don't remember," said I; "how should I know the name of any of these places—it is as long as my arm—I have it written down somewhere." "Pray, sir," said the man after a little pause, "are you a foreigner?" "No," I replied, "I am not a foreigner—I'm a sculptor." Then I told him that I had been living at Rome all my life and was only here on a visit. He seemed struck, and said that

his father had been a sculptor too, and had worked for Flaxman. So then I found him changed in manner—no longer so sharp and laconic.’

A few such mishaps as these increased kind Mrs. Huskisson’s vigilance, and Gibson never left her hospitable care without previously written directions. But if the journey were for any distance no directions in the world availed. When Mr. Williams, or Miss Hosmer, or any other friend, were unable to accompany him from Rome to England, a courier had him in charge. And even when escorted by friends his ways were occasions of interminable amusement. On a tour in Switzerland, where Miss Hosmer formed one of the party, she extended her usual care of the Master to his luggage as well. That consisted of three pieces, one of which was a hat-box. But Miss Hosmer soon observed that this box was never opened, and thus it remained, inviolate, to the end of the journey. Returned to Rome she ventured to ask what object had been served by giving the hat-box the tour, and herself the trouble of looking after it. Gibson calmly replied, ‘The Greeks had a great respect for the number three—yes—the Greeks—for the number three,’ and that was all the explanation she ever obtained.

The same vigilance which was necessary on journeys had to be exercised over him as regarded London engagements. After accepting an engagement to dine—for the express purpose of meeting people he particularly wished to see, or who still more wished to see him—the invitation being given long beforehand in order better to secure all parties—the whole fact would go out of his head, and when the day came Gibson would serenely congratulate himself that he had at length an evening free. Nor did the conviction and disgrace which was sure to ensue on the morrow in the least disconcert him. How should it, when he was perfectly content to own the worst—which was that he had forgotten all about the matter. It signified little to him that some of the disappointed hosts were of the great of the land. Nor was it less true that he would occasionally post a letter, and in some instances to the highest quarters, equally devoid of date, address, and signature. In short, Gibson was always Gibson. Yet it may be added in his own words, when writing of a very pretty woman, ‘I forget names, numbers, and places—but I never forget what is beautiful.’

In editing these memoirs of a dear old friend I

have not attempted to describe his works consecutively—a list of their subjects and of the patrons for whom they were executed is given at the end of this volume. But my task would not be fulfilled without attempting a slight analysis of the art to which he devoted his entire affections. Nor could I venture to discourse on Gibson's merits as a sculptor single-handed. In what follows I am guided by the opinions of those most competent to judge, and mainly by those of one whom he had educated to form a sound judgment even upon himself.

The great charm of Mr. Gibson's art corresponded with that of his own character—and that charm was its purity. In that respect no modern sculptor has approached him. Thorwaldsen's works are admired most by some, as more directed to human sympathy. It may be admitted that the great Danish sculptor appealed more to the heart than the head; whereas Mr. Gibson's works, if less sympathetic, are more intellectual, and full of a refined beauty which Thorwaldsen (except in his Mercury) never equalled. At the same time the merit of great originality of invention does not belong to Mr. Gibson—his loveliest things are classic myths translated into marble.

Nor, though he was a real poet in feeling, can he be said to have left a poem in marble like Thorwaldsen's *Night*, which is the most exquisite poem ever penned by the modelling tool. But Mr. Gibson's knowledge of the human figure was consummate—his taste exquisite and sure—his feeling for drapery, his power of modelling it, and his unwearied patience in obtaining the best disposition of the folds, were unapproachable. The finest modern specimen of drapery is perhaps that upon his *Venus*. (I venture to add that also upon his *Clemency*, in the group of *Her Majesty*.) With all his knowledge of anatomy and all his experience in modelling, he seldom made a sketch in clay eight inches high without the living model before him. This serves to show what patience and conscientious study he brought to his task.

His *Hunter* may be reckoned as his greatest work. In this he is as original as powerful—in this he comes nearest to the spirit as distinguished from the style of the antique. He was very *fond* of his *Venus*, but he was *proud* of his *Hunter*. He was very fond, too, of his *Cupid* with the *Butterfly*—‘*Love tormenting the Soul*’—the one belonging to Mr. Holford—and for *sentiment* that may be looked upon as one of the most exquisite

of his productions. His last group of Theseus and the Robber, which had been in his mind for years, is very grand. Had he lived to finish that, it would have been his greatest achievement. His style has the antique *charm*—that is, great strength and anatomical knowledge, with the most refined and delicate beauty, perfect drawing, and nobility of sentiment.

His skill in bas-relief was especially great—here again no living sculptor comes near him. The bas-relief of the Hours leading the Horses of the Sun, which, as has been seen, he modelled with such delight and ardour, is in itself a sufficient pedestal for his fame to rest on. His knowledge of the laws which govern this department of sculpture was profound. Hence his drawings, which may be classed under the head of bas-reliefs, are among the strongest evidences of his powers. His skill as a draughtsman is possessed by no living man. The original drawing of the Marriage Feast of Cupid and Psyche, done some years before his death, when his hand was firm as a rock, is matchless. The outline looks as if it were engraved. If a fellow-labourer in the art were to speak frankly he would perhaps say Mr. Gibson's greatness lay more in his wonderfully-executed drawings than in

his finished works—his drawings have a fire and passion which his marble does not entirely translate. For this reason in his iconic statues, where fire and passion have no place, he is peculiarly grand. Of these portrait monuments the first statue of Mr. Huskisson, with the bare arm, may be said to be the finest. The statue of Her Majesty, life size, is also a most beautiful production.

In knowledge of the horse he stands pre-eminent. He gave great attention to the study of this animal in the grand bas-reliefs at Wentworth, and it is to be regretted that no equestrian statue exists by his hand.

Gibson chose his subjects either from classic story, or from incidents in real life which he turned to account, as we have seen, under some classic name. But late in life—beginning it in 1862—he modelled a sacred subject, Christ blessing little children. This was in the form of a bas-relief. He was anxious to show that he could deal with such a group. He describes his feelings in his own characteristic way in a letter to Mr. Sandbach, for whom the work was executed. 'When I began to model the head of Christ, the fear of failing came over me. I had to express the Divine within, perceived through outward form—

the form of man—elevated, beautiful, and benevolent.’ This bas-relief shows that ‘he could rise to the conception of Christian art. The Divine head is full of pathos, and some of the children beautifully felt. A naked boy resisting his mother’s efforts to bring him to the Saviour belongs to Gibson’s Grecian part, and would have been in place in an antique procession. His own features and those of Mr. Sandbach are introduced in two of the male figures.

I have said before, or rather Gibson has said for himself, that he found entire happiness in his art. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that little tender temptations ever and anon assaulted him. As late as 1860 he wrote to one who had observed symptoms more than usually redolent of ‘the arrow of soft tribulations,’ ‘That bit of temptation at Liverpool glides round about me, but some one will be beforehand with me before I can make up my mind to give up Rome for Liverpool;’ but he never really wavered. He was not meant in any way for the cares and responsibilities of life, and he worked on all his days, in his own words, ‘happily and with ever new pleasure, avoiding evil, and with a calm soul—making images, not for worship, but for the love

of the beautiful. The beautiful elevates us above the crowd in this world—the ideal, higher—yes—higher still—to celestial beauty—the fountain of all. Socrates said that outward beauty is the sign of inward—in the life of a man, as in an image, every part should be beautiful.’

Such sentiments as these, from whatever source, were to Gibson a guiding reality. Would that all lived as much up to their light as he!

At the same time the tributes of respect which follow on fame, were, like Fame herself, never more thoroughly enjoyed by any man than by this serene and virtuous philosopher. The compliment paid to him (and as was truly said to England too) by the late King of Bavaria in placing his statue with that of Thorwaldsen, Tenerani, and Rauch, on the exterior of the Glyptothek, and in the Hall of the Walhalla; that other still more personal compliment by Lord Lytton in the dedication of ‘Zanoni’ to him—human tributes of which any man might be proud—were received by Gibson with a simplicity of self-respect which lent them a higher worth. The condescending kindness of Her Majesty and of the noble Prince Consort—the visits of the Prince of Wales and the Princess Royal to Rome, and to his studio—their unfeigned

pleasure in the company of one so fresh, artless, and unembarrassed, shed real gladness into his heart. Utterly unconventional himself he soon dissipated the outer conventions of all who approached him. Etiquette was no more made for him than for a child, and if ever transgressed by him the fault was the result of a purer feeling than such rules are meant to restrain.

I have said enough, I think, and have allowed him to say enough for himself, to show the pure and guileless, the truly Christian nature of the man. As years passed on Gibson began to feel their weight, though his hand knew no decline. He left Rome regularly as the heat began—visited England, Switzerland or the Tyrol—always returning to Rome with comparatively renewed strength. But more than once he had fallen unconscious in his studio, though apparently rising again without any perceptible decline of power. The summer of 1864 had been spent chiefly at Leghorn by him and his friend Mr. Penry Williams—not the best place in July and August for bracing the nerves. Switzerland had been their destination, but Gibson, worn with heat and fatigue, stuck fast at Leghorn. He writes to Miss Lloyd, ‘I am surprised at myself for not having continued on to Switzerland.

Williams should have insisted, but he did not. If you or Miss Hosmer had been in charge of us you would have pushed us on. I do say that a woman is a useful thing in this world, for she gives good advice.' In 1865 again, although he crossed the Alps to Lucerne, the weather was most unfavourable, and the two friends turned back to the Lago Maggiore. Perhaps the absence of more invigorating air for these two successive summers was unfortunate. However, the time for departure was come. After visiting, with Mr. Penry Williams, a sick room at Milan—the last time I saw him—he returned to Rome in October, feeling particularly well; and resumed his usual labours. On the 9th of January 1866, when apparently in perfect health, he was seized with paralysis. He had shortly before received the tidings of the death of Sir Charles Eastlake, which, it is believed, expedited the fatal blow. A second and a third stroke deprived him of speech. When a telegram from Her Majesty enquiring for him, and expressing regret at hearing of his illness, was conveyed to him by Mr. Odo Russell, he was still conscious. He lifted his hand as far as he could, the paper was put into it, and he held it firmly. It was the last thing that roused him. One who was present thus

wrote, 'I hope Her Majesty has been told how he felt her gracious kindness.' The same writer adds, 'Very early on the morning of his death Miss Lloyd and I were summoned hastily to his room. Good Miss Lloyd remained with him to the last, but I left a kiss on his forehead and came away. Oh! how cold and drear the stars looked that morning as I walked slowly home! I saw the Master a moment after death. How grand and calm, and beautiful the face was! Then I left Rome for a time. One of my best friends was taken from me when the Master died.'

John Gibson died on the 27th of January 1866—and lies in the English cemetery at Rome. Having been decorated with the cross of the Legion of Honour, a company of French soldiers with muffled drums, formed part of the funeral procession, and fired a salute over the grave.

The last words he penned were to me. I shall be forgiven for allowing the reader to peruse this pathetic fragment—at once the last page in Gibson's history, and a tribute to him who had left this world little more than a month before.

'January, 1866.

'My dear Lady Eastlake,—Ever since that sad hour when I received your letter my spirit has

been oppressed by the intelligence of the great loss you have sustained—the loss of your most affectionate one—one so eminent for his talent and worth. How honourable and just he was in all the actions of his life! Yes—dear Lady Eastlake, I do sympathise deeply with you. I am one of the many who mourn over this sad event.

‘As time rolled on I felt deeper and deeper in his debt—it was he brought me forth to the patronage of the Prince and Queen—and also to the Royal Academy.

‘Sir Charles’ best works will always be admired for their beauty and refined taste by all who have real knowledge of the great masters. You contributed greatly to the happiness of his life; by your knowledge of art—by your affectionate nature.’ . . .

Mr. Gibson had no near relations except his brother Solomon, for whom he had amply provided.* His thoughts therefore turned to his own country, and to the Academy of which he

* Mr. Solomon Gibson, hearing of the illness of his brother, started immediately from Liverpool, where he resided, in order to see him. He was unaccompanied, and never reached Rome. At Paris, entering an hotel, he fell down dead. His death took place a few days before that of his brother.

felt himself proud to be a member. He wrote thus in 1864 to Sir Charles Eastlake, as President of that body.

‘ My renowned master Canova left in his will the models of some of his works to the Academy of his own country. Thorwaldsen left all his models to his sovereign and country, with the principal amount of his money. They are arranged and seen by the public of his own country. It is this fact that has induced me to venture to make an offer to leave in my will all the models of my works executed in marble, with the chief part of my fortune, to the Royal Academy. In my offer to the Academy the sum of money which I have named is presented with the collection of the models in plaster, on condition that space be provided to arrange them in—that they may be seen during Exhibition days by the public.

‘ I will also express without fear of being considered presumptuous that these works of mine—the labour of forty-six years of study and practice under the instruction for five years of Canova, and, after his death, of Thorwaldsen, and at the same time surrounded by able rivals from different nations—yes—I do feel that the collection of my models seen together would be of use to the young sculptors as to style.’

It is almost needless to say that this offer, upon the conditions stated, was joyfully accepted at a general meeting of the Academy.

By his will, therefore, as it ultimately stood, Mr. Gibson left his entire fortune to the Royal Academy—legacies of a small amount to friends, excepted—together with the contents of his studio. These include not merely casts from all his works, and models in plaster of various designs not executed in marble, but also the grand and nearly finished group of Theseus and the Robber left in clay, and cast after his death; with his original statue of Bacchus in marble, and several *replicas* in marble from other statues. Also his book of original designs.

I am permitted to add that, as soon as arrangements can be made, these works, embodying the entire course of the great Sculptor's art, will be placed in Old Burlington House, and made available at all times for public inspection.

A simple monument of a Greek character is erected over Gibson's grave, bearing a medallion profile of his fine head, and with the following inscription from the pen of Lord Lytton.

TO THE MEMORY OF
JOHN GIBSON, SCULPTOR, R.A.

BORN AT CONWAY 19TH JUNE, 1790, DIED AT ROME, WHERE HE HAD
RESIDED 48 YEARS, 27TH JAN^V., 1866.
HIS NATIVE GENIUS STRENGTHENED BY CAREFUL STUDY,
HE INFUSED THE SPIRIT OF GRECIAN ART
INTO MASTERPIECES ALL HIS OWN.
HIS CHARACTER AS A MAN WAS IN UNISON
WITH HIS ATTRIBUTES AS AN ARTIST,
BEAUTIFUL IN ITS SIMPLICITY AND TRUTHFULNESS,
NOBLE IN ITS DIGNITY AND ELEVATION.

A monument was also raised to Gibson in the church at Conway. This was done by a subscription limited to a few friends, among whom appears the name of the Prince of Wales.

Mr. Gibson was member of most of the principal Academies of Art, the diplomas of which have been consigned to the Royal Academy. The Prussian order of Full Merit arrived just after his death.

A fine portrait of him by the hand of Mr. Boxall, R.A., belongs to the Gallery of Diploma Works in the Royal Academy. Two portraits of

him were painted by Mr. Penry Williams. The one, taken at an early period of his residence in Rome, was presented to the Academy of St. Luke; the other, painted in 1865, to that of Urbino. The first of these two portraits has been engraved by Wagstaff. The best bust of him was modelled by Mr. Theed, from which the profile outline, heading this work, is taken.

LIST OF WORKS EXECUTED AT ROME *

BY

JOHN GIBSON, R.A.

GROUPS.

Subject	Owner	Place
Her Majesty the Queen between Justice and Clemency. . . .		Prince's Chamber, Palace of West- minster.
Mars and Cupid . . .	Duke of Devonshire .	Chatsworth.
Physche borne by Ze- phyrus	Sir George Beaumont .	
Repetition	Prince Torlonia . . .	Palazzo Torlonia, Rome.
Repetition	Present Emperor of Russia	St. Petersburg.
Hylas surprised by Nymphs	R. Vernon, Esq. . . .	National Gallery.
Hunter and Dog . . .	Henry Sandbach, Esq.	Hafodunos, Llan- rwst.
Repetition	Lord Yarborough . .	Arlington Street.
Repetition	Mr. Clare	Liverpool.
Repetition (unfinished at Gibson's death)		Australia.
Nymph kissing Cupid	John Malcolm, Esq. . .	Poltallock.
Repetition	W. R. Sandbach, Esq.	10 Prince's Gate, London.
Repetition, tinted .	Prince of Wales . . .	Marlborough House.
Wounded Warriortend- ed by Female figure (unfinished at Gib- son's death)		Royal Academy

* This list is unavoidably incomplete, and does not pretend to be chronological.

STATUES.

Subject	Owner.	Place
Paris	G. Watson Taylor, Esq., M.P.	
Sleeping Shepherd-boy	Lord Geo. Cavendish.	
Repetition . .	Duke of Northumber- land.	
Repetition . .	Mr. Lennox	New York.
Cupid tormenting the Soul	Lord Selsey.	
Repetition . .	R. Yates, Esq. . . .	Liverpool. (Now in possession of Michael Belcher, Esq., Holmestead House, Liverpool.)
Repetition, tinted.	R. S. Holford, Esq. . .	Dorchester House.
Cupid disguised as a Shepherd	Sir John Johnstone . .	
Repetition . .	Present Emperor of Russia.	
Repetition . .	Right Hon. Sir Robert Peel.	
Repetition . .	— Collingwood, Esq.	
Repetition . .	Mr. Appleton	Boston, U. S.
Repetition . .	Lord Crewe	Crewe Hall.
Repetition . .	R. Allison, Esq. . . .	Liverpool.
Repetition . .	Henry Farnham, Esq. .	Philadelphia, U. S.
Repetition . .	Abel Bulkley, Esq., Jun.	
Nymph at the Bath .	Earl of Yarborough.	Arlington Street.
Nymph Reposing . .	Count Schönberg . . .	Bavaria.
Sappho	Patteson Ellames, Esq.	Liverpool.
Flora	Lord Durham.	
Repetition . .	— Williams, Esq. . . .	Gwersyllt, North Wales.
Repetition . .	R. Allison, Esq. . . .	Liverpool.
Narcissus	Lord Barrington.	
Repetition . .	— Fort, Esq. . . .	Manchester.
Repetition . .	— Errington, Esq. . . .	
Repetition . .		Presented to Royal Academy.

STATUES—*continued.*

Subject	Owner.	Place
Proserpine . . .	Mr. Ablett . . .	Llanbedr Hall, Nth. Wales.
Repetition . . .	Dwarkanauth Tagore .	Calcutta.
Venus . . .	Mr. Neeld.	
Repetition . . .	Mrs. Preston . . .	Chesterfield House, Richmond.
Repetition . . .	Marquis of Sligq.	
Repetition . . .	M. Uzzelli, Esq.	
Repetition, on a smaller scale .	Prince of Wales . . .	Marlborough House.
Wounded Amazon . .	Marquis of Westminster	Eaton Hall, Cheshire.
Repetition . . .	Mrs. Preston . . .	Chesterfield House, Richmond . . .
Aurora . . .	H. Sandbach, Esq. .	Hafodunos, Llanrwst.
Repetition . . .	Dr. Henry.	
Bacchus . . .		Royal Academy.
Pandora . . .	Lady Marian Alford.	
Repetition . . .	— Penn, Esq.	
Repetition . . .	Mr. Laurence . . .	Mossley Hill, Liverpool.
Hebe . . .	Howard Galton, Esq.	Hadzor.
Repetition . . .	Sir Francis Goldsmid, Bart, M. P.	St. John's Lodge, Regent's Park.
Repetition, tinted .		Royal Academy.
Cupid . . .	Sir W. W. Wynn. .	St. James's Square, London.
Dancing Nymph with Castanets. . . .	— Stirling, Esq.	Glasgow.
Pysche carrying a Cake to Cerberus . . .		
Nymph kissing Cupid .		

PORTRAIT STATUES.

Subject	Place
Her Majesty the Queen	Buckingham Palace.
Repetition	Osborne.
Countess Dowager of Beauchamp, tinted	London.
Right Honourable Sir Robert Peel .	Westminster Abbey.
Right Honourable William Huskisson	Liverpool Cemetery.
Another statue of the same	Lloyd's, Royal Exchange, London.
Repetition, in bronze	Front of Custom House, Liverpool.
George Stephenson	St. George's Hall, Liverpool.
Van Mildert, Bishop of Durham . .	
Kirkman Finlay, Esq., M.P.	Glasgow.
Dudley North, Esq., M.P.	

PORTRAIT BUSTS.

Subject
Two busts of Her Majesty.
One bust of H. R. H. Princess of Wales
„ Wm. Roscoe, Esq.
„ Watson Taylor, Esq., M.P.
„ Mrs. Watson Taylor.
„ Duchess of Wellington.
„ Viscountess Clifden.
„ Mrs. Henry Sandbach.
„ Mr. Henry Sandbach.
„ Sir Charles L. Eastlake.
„ Mrs. Mainwaring.
„ Mrs. Jameson.
„ Sir Charles Lyell.
„ Grazia.
„ Luisa—'a Sabine Woman.'
„ Miss Albano.
„ Dhuleep Singh.
„ Rt. Hon. Ed. Cardwell, M.P.
„ John Lloyd Wynne, Esq.

BASSI RILIEVI.

Subject	Owner.	Place
The Hours leading the Horses of the Sun	Earl Fitzwilliam . . .	Wentworth House.
Phaeton driving the Chariot of the Sun	Same . . .	Wentworth House.
Juno conducting Hypnos to Jupiter	Her Majesty.	
Meeting of Hero and Leander	Duke of Devonshire .	Chatsworth.
Marriage of Psyche and Celestial Love	Her Majesty.	
Repetition . .	Duke of Northumberland.	
Repetition . .	Miss Webb.	
Cupid pursuing Psyche	Duke of Northumberland.	
Repetition . .	Henry Sandbach, Esq.	Hafodunos, Llanrwst, N. Wales.
Repetition . .	Miss Webb.	
Amalthea nursing the Infant Jupiter	Earl of Carlisle . .	Castle Howard.
Wounded Amazon and Horse	Mrs. Huskisson . .	Eartham.
Cupid and Psyche .	Same . . .	Eartham
Repetition . .		Royal Academy.
Venus and Cupid .	Marquis of Abercorn.	
Repetition . .	Howard Galton, Esq. .	Hadzor.
Amazon on Ground, dragged by her horse.	Same	Same.
Minerva bringing Pegasus to Bellerophon	C. S. Dickens, Esq.	
Eros and Anteros contending for the Soul	Lady Davy.	
Christ blessing little Children.	H. Sandbach, Esq. .	Hafodunos, Llanrwst.
Eros and Aphrodite.		
Zephyrus and Psyche.		

BASSI RILIEVI: MONUMENTAL.

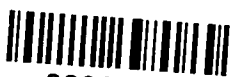
Subject	Place
Justice protecting Innocence. In memory of Thomas Earle, Esq.	Liverpool Cemetery Chapel.
William Earle, Esq., seated, reading the Bible	Liverpool Cemetery Chapel.
Figure of Hope. In memory of Mr. and Mrs. E. Roscoe	Liverpool Unitarian Chapel.
An Angel consoling Wife and two Children. In memory of Eyre Coote, Esq.	
A Husband mourning over his dying Wife, with an Infant in his arms. In memory of Mrs. Byrom	Daresbury Church, near Warrington, Cheshire.
Figure of Blundell Holinshed, Esq., accompanied by Guardian Angel	Liverpool Cemetery Chapel.
An Act of Charity. In memory of — Hamerton, Esq.	Liverpool Cemetery Chapel.
Seated Figure. In memory of Mrs. Robinson	Liverpool Cemetery Chapel.
Angel carrying Infant, and leading the Mother to Heaven. In memory of Countess of Leicester.	
Angel receiving the Spirit. In memory of Mrs. Pigott.	
Portrait figure of Mrs. Henry Sandbach. In memory of her.	Hafodunos.
Angel receiving the Spirit. In memory of Lady Knightley.	
Angel descending to the Dying. In memory of Mrs. Cheney.	
Mrs. Huskisson kneeling, angel descending	Chichester Cathedral.
Mr. Westcar. In memory of him.	
Angel plucking Flowers. In memory of four Bonomi Children who died in one week.	

MODELS IN PLASTER.

(Chiefly belonging to the Royal Academy.)

Subject

Eteocles and Polynices ; Jocasta intervening.
Birth of Venus ; received by Celestial Love, and crowned by Persuasion.
Cupid wounding Sappho.
Venus and Cupid appearing to Sappho to console her.
Love and Idleness.
Psyche receiving nectar from Hebe, in the presence of Celestial Love.
Cenone : Shepherdess deserted by Paris.
Love between Beauty and Fortune.
The Death of Hippolytus.
Wounded Warrior, and Female tending his wound.
Theseus and Robber.
Clay Sketch, on smaller scale, of Theseus and Robber. (Belonging to Miss Hosmer.)



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